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NEWS SUMMARY

GENERAL

Nine IRA prisoners to contest election

Nine IRA prisoners will contest next month's general election in the Irish Republic. They include the four on hunger strike in the Maze near Belfast. Page 3

Liberals leader David Steel met Joe McDonnell, who is on the 21st day of his fast, but held out little hope of a settlement on their special status demands.

Guerrillas warn on Mid-East oil

Palestinians would strike at the West's Middle East oil resources if Israel turned the Syrian missile crisis into war against the PLO, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine said.

Commando chief Yasser Arafat confirmed that his guerrillas included Libyans but did not admit to direct aid. Reagan praises envoy Habib. Page 2

Nuclear halt

France halted nuclear testing on the Pacific island Mururoa and is reconsidering its arms programme. Back Page

Back Nato's call

West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher threatened to resign if his Free Democratic Party rejected Nato's stand on medium-range nuclear missiles. Support for Schmidt urged. Page 2

Mme Soong dies

Song Chingling, widow of modern China's founder Sun Yat-sen, died of leukemia aged 90. On her deathbed she was appointed honorary head of state.

Cross for mass

Workers are building a 43 ft high cross in Warsaw's Victory Square for Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński's requiem mass tomorrow. The Most Rev. Derek Warlock, Roman Catholic archbishop of Liverpool, will represent bishops of England and Wales.

Stockpile probe

Poland's free trade union Solidarity is investigating whether increasingly scarce food is being stockpiled. Party denies revisionism. Page 2

Another Sunday

A Sunday newspaper, to be the Sunday Journal, will be launched in the autumn.

More abortions

Abortions in England and Wales rose 10.6% per cent last year to a record 130,264. The British Pregnancy Advisory Service said the recession made it "more difficult for women to have a free choice."

Woman for trial

Political researcher Pamela Collison was committed for trial in Newcastle charged with murdering Margaret Vickers, whose surgeon husband Paul is also accused.

£4m to amputee

Californian Steven Throop, 16, won damages of about \$8.3m (£5m) from Conrail train corporation. He lost both legs and an arm after brushing against an 11,000-volt power line.

All is not lost

Spain's grand prix motor race will go ahead although the organisers expect to lose nearly £50,000.

Briefly ...

Jazz pianist Mary Lou Williams died aged 71.

Robinson College, Cambridge, was opened by the Queen.

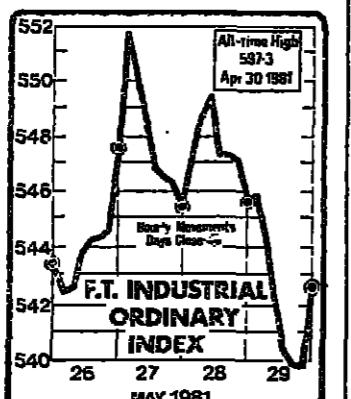
Nelton, napped by the FT's Dominic Wigan, won at 12-l. Racing, Page 8

BUSINESS

Gilts advance; Sterling firmer

GILTS continued firmer on U.S. prime rate cuts and hopes of a settlement in the Civil Service pay dispute. The Government Securities Index added 0.42 at 97.67. Page 24

EQUITIES eased on speculation about imminent rights



issues. The FT 30-Share Index finished 3.1 lower at 542.5. Page 24

STERLING firmed 5 points to \$2.07. It was higher at DM 4.325 (DM 4.315), FFr 11.51 (FFr 11.395) and SwFr 4.295 (SwFr 4.2925). Its trade-weighted index rose to 98.9 (98.6). Page 23

DOLLAR showed little change. It rose to DM 2.33 (DM 2.325) and FFr 5.56 (FFr 5.51) but was easier at Y223.75 (Y224.25). Its Bank of England index rose to 107.1 from 106.9. Page 23

GOLD rose \$1 to \$479.5 in London. In New York the Comex June close was \$479. Page 23

WALL STREET was up 1.3 at 995.55 before the close. Page 20

TRIUMPH ACCLAIM, being built by BL and Honda, will have 70 per cent of its components by value made in Britain. Back Page

A GROUP of about 20 West Midlands businessmen offered £1m to BL's Rover plant at Solihull, in the hope of continuing production under the management of a new company. Page 4

GOVERNMENT will introduce laws making it harder for buyers to build up blocks of company shares anonymously. Page 3

JAPAN'S GOLD market opened for private members, ahead of public opening later in the year. The price was set at Y3,497 a gramme — about \$485 an ounce.

JAPANESE steel production overtook that of the U.S. for the first time last year but Nippon Steel, the world's biggest producer, reported profits down by a third. European exports double. Back Page

ENGINEERING orders and sales remained low in spite of an improved new order position at the start of the year. Figures shown. Page 4

RAILWAY unions may seek Government assurances about future financing of the industry, to try to curb spreading industrial action. Page 4

SAVOY HOTEL "A" shares fell 5p to 190p — equal to the bid price from Trusthouse Forte, enabling THF to pick up more shares. "B" shares lost 25p to £1.25. Page 17

KCA INTERNATIONAL, oil services group, is floating off its drilling services subsidiary as a fully quoted company on the London stock exchange. Page 16; Lex, Back Page

WOLVERHAMPTON and Bury Breweries saw taxable profits for the six months to end March up more than 12 per cent to £4.1m, on turnover up 14 per cent to £34.04m. Page 16

CHIEF PRICE CHANGES YESTERDAY

(Prices in pence unless otherwise indicated)

Hill Samuel	144	-7
Waird Group	137	-5
Metway (B.)	305	-32
Metal Box	162	-15
Midland Bank	307	-5
NatWest Bank	355	-2
Savoy A	190	-6
Tube Invests.	172	-8
Ward (T. W.)	113	-5
Wheeler's Reals.	370	-15
Burnah Oil	147	-5
FCA	182	-4
Charter Cons.	222	-10
Eagle Corp.	46	-7
RTZ	520	-13
Swan Resources	65	-8
Tanks Cons.	313	-10

Higher charges for Lloyd's Bank customers

By TIM DICKSON

LLOYD'S BANK will raise current account charges to personal customers on June 10. It will overtake the Midland as the most expensive of the big four high street banks.

In the latest of a string of increases by the big banks, Lloyds will raise the charge to customers for a cheque or direct debit entry by 2.5p to 20p. Withdrawals through the

bank's Cashpoint cash dispenser system will cost 1.5p instead of 1.25p for all amounts up to £100.

Free banking will continue to apply for those whose balances do not fall below £100 during a quarterly charging period. Those who do incur charges will still have them relieved by nominal interest payments made on the average sums kept in the account.

Lloyds estimates that the effect of the changes will be to reduce by 6 per cent to 84 per cent the proportion of customers who enjoy free banking.

The decision to introduce the first increases at Lloyds since December 1979, was apparently not made without opposition in the bank. Some feel it could hinder the bank's

attempt to woo the large number of people who still do not have a bank account.

Lloyds also took the opportunity yesterday to fall into line with its rivals by announcing a charge of 30p for non-current account customers paying in consumer credit transfers.

The current of competition,

Page 14

S. Africa-U.S.

leak may harm talks on Namibia

BY QUENTIN PEEL IN JOHANNESBURG AND DAVID SUCHAN IN WASHINGTON

WESTERN EFFORTS to promote an internationally acceptable settlement in Namibia (South-West Africa) could be seriously embarrassed by the leak in Washington of confidential documents relating to recent talks between the U.S. and South African Governments.

The documents were yesterday made available to the Press by an official of a Washington-based private anti-apartheid lobby group. It was not clear how the official obtained the documents but public reactions to the leak left no doubt about their authenticity.

According to Mr. Botha's meeting with Dr. Crocker, the South African Foreign Minister said: "We're convinced Swapo is Marxist."

Referring to Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of Swapo, Mr. Botha reportedly added: "Nujoma will nationalise the whole place and cause upheaval and civil war, involving South Africa. We will have to invade Namibia and other countries as well."

"We are pleading for you to see the dangers of a wrong solution in Namibia. It would be better to have a low-level conflict there indefinitely than to a general conflagration."

Though the statement comes in the context of a discussion on presupposing a civil war in the country, this explicit warning that South Africa might be forced to invade Namibia in the event of a Swapo victory seems certain to confirm black African suspicions that the Pretoria Government is less than sincere.

Mr. Botha attempted to defuse the potential embarrassment with a terse statement issued in Pretoria yesterday in which he insisted that "nothing was discussed or held out in prospect during my visit to Washington which was not aimed at serving the freedom, peace and progress of all the people—black and white—of South Africa and South-West Africa."

While he warned that the maintenance of confidentiality was an essential ingredient for the establishment of mutual confidence, he added that he had received a message from General Haig and had "full understanding of his dilemma. Our Foreign Staff adds: U.S. attempts to formulate new proposals for Namibian independence were "doomed to failure."

Mr. Sam Nujoma said in London yesterday. He was speaking after a meeting with Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary, about future arrangements for Namibia.

The Swapo president also criticised Western tactics on Namibia. He told Lord Carrington on his visit to Swapo's view South Africa would only agree to a Namibian settlement if it was not adhered to the international trade sanctions.

Separate ministerial posts for the armed services abolished

BY BRIDGET BLOOM AND MARGARET VAN HATTEM

THE GOVERNMENT last night abolished the three posts of Minister for the Army, Navy and Airforce in an apparent bid to tighten its control over the three armed services and shift public displays of inter-service rivalry.

This controversial move, announced simultaneously from Downing Street and the Ministry of Defence, comes as the Government is involved in the biggest review of British defence expenditure for nearly a decade.

It comes less than two weeks after Mrs Thatcher sacked Mr Keith Speed, her Navy Minister, for publicly voicing his fears that the Government was intent on major cuts in the Navy's budget.

Until now, the ministerial team headed by Mr John Nott, the Defence Secretary, has consisted of Lord Trenchard, the Minister of State, and three under-secretaries of state, one each for the Army, Navy and Airforce.

In future, there will be two ministers of state. Lord Trenchard will become responsible for defence procurement while Mr Peter Blakemore, formerly Minister of State at the Foreign Office, will become Minister of State for the Armed Forces. As such, he will chair the three service boards, formerly chaired by the three under-secretaries.

Below the ministers of state will be two under-secretaries. Mr Philip Goodhart, formerly Under-secretary for the Army, becomes responsible for the armed forces, while Mr Geoffrey Pattie, formerly Under-secretary for the Airforce, becomes responsible for defence procurement.

Mr Nott is, however, known to feel that this system has produced, too much "special pleading" as he termed it in last week's defence debate.

Clearly, the changes are designed to give greater political control over the three services to the Secretary of State.

It was claimed in Whitehall last night that Mrs Thatcher and Mr Nott had planned the changes for some months, and that the Speed affair provided the occasion, but not the cause.

Defence posts end tradition,



Mr Peter Blakemore, Minister for Armed Forces

becomes responsible for defence procurement.

There will be no replacement for Mr Speed at under-secretary level. At the Foreign Office, Mr Blakemore's responsibilities relating mainly to Latin America and the Far East—will be distributed among the other junior ministers.

The Government was anxious yesterday to stress that the reorganisation would not diminish contact between ministers and defence chiefs. On the contrary, it would give defence chiefs direct access to ministers of state rather than under-secretaries.

However, this is unlikely to convince those, both in the armed forces and on the Con-

servative back benches, who believe that the Prime Minister primarily intended to assert control and to ensure that inter-service rivalry, particularly in relation to expenditure, is not fought at ministerial level.

The sacking of Mr. Speed became the focus of widespread discontent within the Government over the Prime Minister's use of small Cabinet subcommittees, usually comprising three to four ministers, to keep a tight rein on decision making.

Discontented Cabinet Ministers, junior ministers and back-benchers, who said they felt excluded from most discussions and were looking for conciliatory gestures in a reshuffle, are unlikely to be satisfied by the present exercise.

The decision to abolish the posts of Army, Navy and Airforce seems certain to provoke hostility from within the services. Service chiefs have grown used to having a minister fight for their interests within the Defence Ministry and, occasionally, within Parliament.

The Treasury has created an additional £750m of gilt-edged stock to give the Bank of England greater scope in its handling of the gilt market and, in particular, to meet any surge of demand.

The new stock will consist of further tranches of £250m of each of three existing issues:

12.4 per cent Exchequer, 1982; 12 per cent Treasury, 1985; and 12 per cent Exchequer, 1992.

The issues will not be offered for sale or operated as a tap stock in the conventional way but will be made available via the Government Broker to the

NEWS

Prisoners to stand in Irish election

FINANCIAL TIMES REPORTER

NINE REPUBLICAN prisoners are to run against Government candidates in next month's general election in the Irish Republic. Four are on hunger strike at the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland.

The nine prisoners, including a woman in Armagh jail, are contesting the election to draw attention to their demands for political status. Four strikers have died in the Maze in support of these demands.

The Dublin-based National H-Blocks Committee yesterday announced the names of the candidates and said they would mount a nationwide campaign to have them elected.

Six of the nine candidates are members of the Provisional IRA and three are in the Irish Republican Socialist Party, the political wing of the Irish National Liberation Army.

A decision of the H-Blocks Committee to run candidates in

four border constituencies is expected to force the Independent Fianna Fail party, led by Dublin MP Mr. Neil Blaney, to withdraw four of the seven candidates already nominated.

Last night's announcement by the H-Blocks Committee ended speculation that Mrs. Bernadette McAliskey, former Mid-Ulster MP at Westminster, would attempt to win a seat in the Dail.

As Prime Minister Mr Charles

Haughey continued his electioneering yesterday, army experts defused a 1-lb plastic bomb in an election headquarters at Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, shortly before he was due to speak there.

The Irish National Liberation Army said they planted a "bomb to serve as a warning to Haughey and other politicians who were collaborating with the British Government."

Extra legislation to curb share predators

BY CHRISTINE MOIR

THE GOVERNMENT has decided after all to introduce legislation making it harder for predators to build up blocks of shares in companies under the cloak of nominees.

Clauses to secure this are to be introduced into the last stage of the Companies Bill after initial resistance by the Department of Trade.

After the notorious case of Consolidated Gold Fields in February last year, when companies within the De Beers Mining group anonymously built up a significant stake in Consolidated, the City and Labour Party interests called for tighter regulations to prevent such moves.

The Government issued a consultative document in August

but ultimately decided that the Companies Bill was already over-weighted with legal difficulties making it impossible to draft appropriate clauses.

Yesterday it made a volte-face and issued a second consultative paper which proposes detailed clauses for introduction into the Bill.

These cover the controversial definition of a "concert party" — individuals or groups acting together but separately to control shares; changes to the occasions when interests must be disclosed; new penalties for failure to disclose; and tougher powers for companies to investigate the identities of shareholders.

Under the proposals, buyers of shares would have to:

• Disclose holdings of more than 5 per cent in a public (not just a quoted) company when they know of the holding. Previously, only share stake movements had to be disclosed.

• Disclose holdings by companies in which they control more than one-fifth of the votes.

• Disclose and take pains to discover deals done by associates acting in concert with them wherever there is an association, whether or not legally binding.

Companies' powers to investigate the identities of shareholders would also be extended. It is proposed that they be able to freeze those rights until disclosure was made. Furthermore, exemption from such a freeze would be more difficult to obtain than at present.

Department of Trade, Companies (No 2) Bill. Disclosure of Interests in Shares. A consultative document.

register, or their agents. Minority holders in a company would also be able to demand the company to undertake such inquiries.

Finally there would be penalties if such inquiries were baulked. The proposals do not go so far as some recommendations have suggested — as stripping the undisclosed holder of his voting or share rights.

However, the courts or the Trade Secretary would now be able to freeze those rights until disclosure was made. Furthermore, exemption from such a freeze would be more difficult to obtain than at present.

Department of Trade, Companies (No 2) Bill. Disclosure of Interests in Shares. A consultative document.

Surge in cut-price holiday bookings

By Elaine Williams

Bad weather in Britain and a spate of cut-price holiday offers have brought about a sudden surge in last-minute bookings, according to the Association of British Travel Agents.

Despite the recession and high unemployment, the association says that between 30,000 and 40,000 overseas packages have been booked this week alone. According to group tour operators, bookings this month have been two to three times higher than in the same period last year.

Customers are taking advantage of the many price reductions offered on holiday packages for next month. Thomson Holidays, the market leader, has reduced prices on some packages by up to 27%.

Holiday charges have been cut because many tour operators increased the numbers of packages available this year by an average of 15-20 per cent — despite the forecasts that bookings would remain at about last year's level.

As a result, competition within the trade has intensified, leading to cut-price deals.

Both Thomson and Horizon have now sold about 80 per cent of their capacity this year.

There are signs that the boom in U.S. holidays may be over.

Casino men acquitted

FOUR MEN accused of defrauding a London gaming club of more than £1m by "skimming" takings from the casino tables, were acquitted at the Old Bailey yesterday, on the direction of Judge Bar.

The judge told the jury there was no evidence to connect the four — Mr. Cyril Levan, Mr. Anthony Jackson, Mr. Joel Salkin and Mr. Jack Langman — to the "unknown way" in which fraud at the Victoria Sporting Club in Edgware Road might have been carried out. Therefore there was no case for the men to answer.

The jury, also on the judge's direction, acquitted the men, all seniors on the managerial staff of the club, of a conspiracy to defraud the Inland Revenue by falsifying records of accounts and monthly returns to the Gaming Board.

Mr. Salkin pleaded guilty to conspiring with Mr. David Kansler and others, to defraud the Revenue in respect of overtime paid to employees of the club and was given a nine-month suspended sentence.

Mr. Langman was given a conditional discharge after being found guilty of this charge. Mr. Jackson was acquitted of this charge on the judge's direction.

Mr. Salkin was also fined a total of £350 after he had admitted two offences under the Gaming Act 1968.

Mr. Levan also pleaded guilty to participation in a conspiracy and was fined £250.

Mr. Salkin, who was ordered to pay £300 legal aid costs, had originally denied the overtime fraud charge but changed his plea.

The jury was discharged from giving a verdict in connection with theft allegations against Mr. Levan and Mr. Salkin.

Defence posts end a tradition

By Michael Donkin

MR. PETER BLAKER, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, who takes the Defence Ministry hot seat as Minister for the Armed Forces, is a trouble-shooter.

His appointment as an umbrella Minister for all three armed services (responsible for administration, personnel, and logistics) ends the long-standing practice of having separate ministers for each of the armed services, Navy, Army and RAF. It is seen as a move by Mrs. Margaret Thatcher to preempt one Minister being too strongly influenced by senior officers in his Department. Lord Trenchard will be his colleague on the procurement side.

It is widely believed Mr. Keith Speed, former Navy Minister, sacked by Mrs. Thatcher after his revelations about planned spending cuts, was too easily convinced by the admirals, being a former Navy man himself.

To bring all three forces' Ministers under one hat is a long-explored move to prevent any such situation arising while giving the Government tighter control of the rambling (some might say shambolic) Defence Ministry which annually spends more than £12bn of taxpayers' money.

Mr. Blaker was Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Army in 1972-74. His career has been varied.

Born in 1922 in Hong Kong he was educated partly at Shrewsbury and partly at Toronto University. In the Second World War he served in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada. He became a solicitor in 1948 and attended New College, Oxford, where he became president of the union. He was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1952.

He entered the Foreign Service in 1953, holding posts in Phnom-Penh and Ottawa before becoming private secretary to the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in 1962.

He was elected Tory MP for Blackpool South in 1964, which he has represented ever since. Apart from his junior Ministerial post in the Defence Ministry, in Mr. Edward Heath's Administration, Mr. Blaker specialised in foreign and Commonwealth affairs and trade.

Lord Trenchard, Minister of State in the Department of Industry, who becomes the other Minister for the armed forces, will be responsible for procurement — "weapons supremo". He will allocate more than £5.35bn a year, or about 40 per cent of the overall defence budget. He is thus the man likely to be wood most by industry.

Lord Trenchard is the son of "Boom" Trenchard, who built the RAF in the 1920s and became first Marshal of the RAF and first Viscount Trenchard.

Before appointment to the Government in 1979 he was an industrialist and chairman of Carpet International. He had been on the board of T. Wall and Sons (1963-68) and Unilever (1967-77).

His appointment is significant because procurement of equipment is given a minister of its own for the first time. Lord Trenchard's task will be to allocate spending priorities among the weapons required in the 1980s and 1990s including setting how many ships the Navy will retain after the review.

'Globetrain' hopes rise for Laker

BY DAVID CHURCHILL, CONSUMER AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

A HAWKER SIDDELEY group subsidiary engaged in trading practices which were anti-competitive under the terms of the 1980 Competition Act, the Office of Fair Trading has concluded in a report.

The practices involved relate to attempts by Petter Refrigeration to encourage dealers and service agents not to handle refrigeration equipment made by other companies.

The OFT findings follow an investigation lasting almost 10 months. The result is that Petter will be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for a new investigation to determine whether the anti-competitive practices operate against the public interest unless it gives the OFT an assurance within the next month that the unfair trading practices will be abandoned.

The OFT has already said it has found no evidence that the unfair practices continued after August 28, 1980, although it acknowledges that they could resume.

Petter said last night that it was studying the report and would be seeking talks with the OFT about its conclusions.

The decision to investigate Petter, as one of the first two probes under the OFT's new powers granted by the Competition Act, was taken last August.

Petter, which had a 1980 turnover of £5.8m, sells complete refrigeration units as well as spare parts, and also provides an after-sales service and training. The refrigeration equipment is usually used for commercial transport.

Unfair trading practices investigated by the OFT related to attempts by Petter to induce dealers and service agents not to sell, service or repair refrigeration gear that had not been made by Petter. The OFT concluded in a report that Petter carried out such practices until August 28, 1980.

The OFT also concluded that Petter's unfair trading activities were aimed at "restricting, distorting, or preventing competition" in the market.

No Monopolies Commission investigation can be formally started until at least a month after the OFT's report is published.

Investigation into TI Raleigh Industries, launched at the same time as the Petter probe, took over six months to complete and was finally referred to the Monopolies Commission only last month.

"Petter Refrigeration, a report by the OFT under section 3 of the Competition Act 1980. Available from the OFT, Brecon Buildings, London, EC4.

U.S. seeks freer trade in services

By Paul Cheeswright

MIR BILL BROCK, President Reagan's special trade representative, yesterday asked for the UK's support in an attempt to make world trade in services more free. This has emerged as a key point in the trade policy of the U.S. Administration.

Mr. Brock suggested to Government leaders, among them Mr. John Biffen, the Trade Secretary, that the best place for talks would be within the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris.

The U.S. anxious to liberalise world trade further after the Tokyo round of multilateral trade negotiations two years ago, has received circumstantial sympathy from the UK Government.

The Government has persistently sought to open EEC markets to the services provided by the City of London, but is more inclined to approach the general question of services sector by sector.

Mr. Brock is at the end of a tour of major European trading capitals.

● The first ministerial talks between the UK and the Soviet Union since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan ended yesterday when the British-Soviet joint commission on trade finished its London meeting.

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UK NEWS

Businessmen offer £15m for Rover plant

BY LORNE BARLING

A GROUP of about 20 West Midlands businessmen was reported yesterday to have made a firm offer for BL's Rover plant at Solihull. Their aim would be to continue car production there under the management of a new company.

BL announced earlier this month that it would close the factory, completed in 1976 at a cost of £27m, and move its Rover operations to Cowley, Oxford. About 2,000 Solihull workers are expected to take part in a protest demonstration on Monday.

News of the reported offer

However, Mr. Ray Horrocks, BL Cars' chairman and chief executive, later stressed that the Rover car remains an integral part of the BL range, with a revised version due to be produced at Cowley early next year. By the mid-80s an all-new Rover will be built on the floorpan of the mid-range LM 10 models, the first of which, a hatchback, is due out of Cowley in 1983.

He also suggested that "sheer economics" would quickly defeat attempts to continue production at Solihull.

News of the reported offer

came from Mr. David Gilroy Bevan, Conservative MP for Yardley, whose constituency adjoins the factory site. He said the businessmen concerned, who did not wish to be identified at this stage, had asked him to approach BL on their behalf.

"They are prepared to run

Rover as a completely independent operation, although there would obviously have to be some co-operation with BL on components," he said.

"Rover has great potential in foreign markets and could be sold in substantial numbers. We do not want to see the plant go

to a foreign company, and we know that a German concern has looked at it."

BL said it had received a two-line telex message outlining the bid, and said it would be prepared to enter discussions on the sale of the plant. It will not consider any takeover of Rover production.

Mr. Bevan, who discussed the closure with trade unionists shortly after it was announced, said it was also possible that other cars could be manufactured at Solihull. The message received by BL specified that

car-finishing capacity at the plant would have to be retained.

"This is a serious bid which has been made directly to Sir Michael Edwardes. We are now awaiting his reply," he said.

The capacity of the Solihull plant is about 3,000 cars a week although this figure has seldom been achieved. Rover output is now at around 800 cars a week.

So far the West Midlands group's inquiry is the only one made for the plant. Mr. Horrocks said there is no intention to "mothball" the plant against a possible future upturn in demand.

In a report published yesterday they claim the first clinical demonstration of a remarkable new way of

studying disease.

The scientists, headed by Dr. George Radda of the Department of Biochemistry at Oxford, working with medical researchers from the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, have shown that their patient was born with a missing enzyme—an "inborn error of metabolism."

Their discovery was made by following the chemistry of his muscular contractions, using a painless process that needs no tissue or blood samples.

The technique is called nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), a "physical" method of chemical analysis in which atoms are made to ring like bells.

Each atom emits a characteristic note, from which a spectrum of the chemical compounds present can be built up.

The Oxford group has shown how to follow the ever-changing chemistry of the living body by NMR spectra, using an instrument they designed in close collaboration with a local company, Oxford Instruments.

By using NMR to follow the biochemistry of their patient's arm muscles, they discovered he had a genuine reason for complaining that he always felt tired and that his muscles always ached.

He is suffering from McArdle's syndrome, a rare condition caused by a missing enzyme, glycogen phosphorlyase.

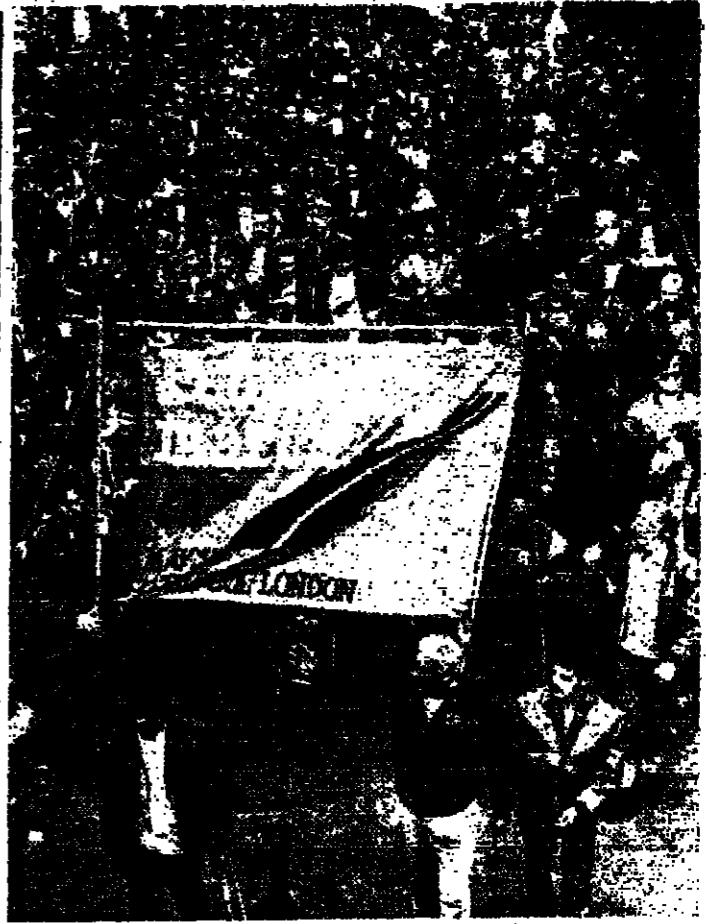
The disease, unsuspected previously, was confirmed by taking "cores" of muscular tissue with a needle, for more conventional chemical analysis.

The discovery is reported in this week's issue of the New England Journal of Medicine.

LABOUR

Scientists use ringing atoms to trace illness

By David Fishlock, Science Editor



Hugh Rountree
The People's March for Jobs wending its way towards Southwark, London. The 500 protesters against unemployment, who have been footloose from Liverpool and Bradford since May 1, are to be received this evening by the new Labour administration of the Greater London Council. Tomorrow they will be the focus of a rally and march from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square.

Unions may ask for rail finance pledge

BY CHRISTIAN TYLER, LABOUR EDITOR

RAILWAY unions may seek Government assurances about future financing in an attempt to stop the spread of unofficial industrial action due to start on Monday in protest against cuts in services.

The worst effects of the strike are expected to be felt in the central and south-western divisions of Southern Region—that is, on trains in and out of London's Victoria and Waterloo stations.

Union leaders fear they may lose control of the situation, especially if staff who fail to turn up for work are suspended.

One of the options the three rail unions will consider at a meeting on Tuesday will be to seek talks with the Secretaries of State for Transport, Industry and Employment. The train drivers' union, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, however, is under great pressure from members to sanction official industrial action.

The same time, they are pledged to fight against cuts, and demands for action continue to grow.

Yesterday, Sir Peter Parker, BR chairman, said the threatened action was "maddening and saddening." It was spoiling BR's case for the future.

"I utterly believe the railways have a great future as a public service and not as a public nuisance," he said.

The Government line is likely to be that the cuts in services mainly in the southern commuter area at present, but extending to Inter-City services in the autumn—are not the product of Government refusal to provide cash, as the unions claim.

Ministers may also argue that the more BR demonstrates that

Ford letter urges self-control

By John Lloyd, Labour Correspondent

A LETTER will go out to all Ford's hourly-paid workers next week asking them to exercise "self control" over industrial action, and to bear the company's problems in mind.

It was drafted as a senior executive of the company warned that survival of mass production of Ford cars is threatened by bad labour relations.

The letter, a personal one from Mr. Ron Todd, the chief union negotiator, is the union's response to a demand from the company for a commitment to improved discipline on the shop floor.

In anticipation of this commitment, the company dropped a code aimed at disciplining official strikers, which was the cause of prolonged stoppages.

The letter stresses that workers must abide by agreed grievance procedures. These have been frequently ignored, particularly in the company's Halewood plant, in Liverpool.

It tells workers that the company and staff are beset by problems, chief among which are foreign competition, projected job losses and the impact of new technology. It says these issues require attention of workers and union officials.

Mr. Stanley Williams, director of manufacturing for Ford UK, said in Manchester yesterday that "our analysis of world motor industry trends, projections of key economic indicators and more importantly, relative union/company relationships, leads us to the conclusion that survival of mass production assembly of motor vehicles in Britain is unlikely unless there is a total and fundamental change of attitude by all involved."

Mr. Williams said that the Japanese-developed concept of quality circles would have to be introduced by the end of the year throughout Europe. So far, the concept has been rejected by the British manual workers.

The National and Local Government Officers Association, the main union representing the staff group, said yesterday it had rejected an offer of

between 9 and 10.8 per cent for the professional and administrative section and 8 per cent for clerical staff.

Motor industry may pull out of agreement with Japan

BY LORNE BARLING

THE INFORMAL arrangements between the UK and Japanese motor industries are under considerable strain, and the British are likely to pull out if the Japanese share of the UK vehicle markets goes very far beyond the expected level this year, writes KENNETH GOODING.

A senior member of the staff at the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders has said: "If the Japanese do not stick

to the terms of the voluntary agreement on export shipments this year, the society's members could well decide it was no longer worth the expense of holding more talks with the Japanese industry.

"They could end the voluntary agreement and instead try to influence the British Government to negotiate with the Japanese to replace it with arrangements which would be

effective."

The British industry's interpretation of the agreement is that the Japanese should try to keep their share of various vehicle markets below 10 per cent.

Mr. David Andrews, executive vice-chairman of BL, has described this as "a gross breach" of the voluntary agreement.

His attack coincided with the launch of two new versions of BL's Sherpa van which will be priced from £3,600—considerably under the prices of vans from the main competition, Datsun, Toyota and Volkswagen.

The Sherpa City is the first

vehicle to bear the Freight Rover badge. Freight Rover was set up by BL as a company within the Land Rover group to concentrate entirely on the production of the Sherpa range of commercial vehicles.

The Post Office has ordered 885 Sherpa vans from Freight Rover. All are powered by a 1.8 litre diesel engine. They will be delivered in the next three months.

Solidarity quarrel peps up building societies conference

Andrew Taylor examines a seaside storm over interest rate fixing

investors an ordinary share scheme with no penalties attached for investors withdrawing money and offering a higher rate of interest Cheltenham and Gloucester has stamped rather hard on the soft step of the big societies.

Other societies compete with each other by offering higher rates of interest on long-term investments. Higher rates are even accepted on ordinary share "withdrawal on demand" schemes provided these include some kind of penalty against investors withdrawing money.

Smaller societies may get away with even more provided they do not step too heavily on the toes of their bigger brothers.

But some of the larger societies are now making it clear that they will no longer be prepared to sit back and watch smaller societies like the Cheltenham and Gloucester trying to grab the centre of the stage.

One delegate, without specifically mentioning names, spoke

to upstage these days and is not without his critics in the building society movement. More than one delegate at Eastbourne noted that Abbey's decision last year to introduce its own "Granny Bond" scheme—not to be confused with the Government's index-linked scheme—had not been universally popular. Perhaps the Abbey's habit of competing aggressively for funds was being picked up elsewhere.

Mr. Leonard Williams, retiring chairman of the Building Societies Association and chief general manager of the Abbey National, if societies did not wish to stick by the rules of a club (the cartel) then they could not expect to be protected by that club.

If societies wanted an interest rate free-for-all, they could have done so, said Mr Thornton who had little doubt that it would be societies like his own Abbey National, with assets of more than £800m which would win the day.

Mr. Williams told this week's conference: "I personally welcome the competition that is taking place between building societies through the various schemes they have on the

margin but it is my firm belief that it is in the best interests of all to stick together on the rate of increase they pay on their ordinary savings accounts, the balances of which represent more than 80 per cent of building society capital."

Meanwhile Mr Stow and his colleagues at the Cheltenham and Gloucester kept conspicuously quiet at the back of the hall while the debate rolled on.

Mr Stow was chairman of the working party which produced the well received BSA report on

"Mortgage Finance in the 1980s"—now known as the "Stow Report."

That Mr Stow's own society broke ranks, and without prior warning, was regarded by some as being like the head prefect being caught smoking in the dormitory.

There is a possibility that the Government—as it has already warned—may intervene if an interest rate war between societies spills over into the rest of the economy. There is much to occupy building societies minds between now and this time next year.

Nationalists seek nuclear free Scottish neutrality

BY MARK MEREDITH, SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENT

THE Scottish National Party yesterday approved a policy of armed, nuclear-free neutrality for an independent Scotland.

On the second day of the party conference in Aberdeen the nationalists also resolved to commit the party to regenerate the Scottish economy.

However, delegates took the teeth out of Left-wing efforts to bring this about through public-sector spending.

The nuclear debate took the Scottish nationalists the nearest yet towards nuclear disarmament. Earlier the party's chairman, Mr. Gordon Wilson, MP, said the party's "firm objective must be to rid Scotland of nuclear bases and weapons and to make East and West Europe nuclear-free zones."

The resolution looked forward to an independent Scotland "pursuing in consultation with its close neighbours, a policy of nuclear-free armed neutrality."

Another resolution demanded withdrawal of nuclear weapons

and pledged a campaign to oppose installation of Trident missiles in Scotland.

Mr. Wilson, who has faced increasing efforts to radicalise the party, said it sought self-government for Scotland to combat the run-down of Scotland.

"Failure of Westminster to act is the price the Scots have to pay for their loyalty to the British system. It takes but never gives."

Mr. Stephen Maxwell, an Edinburgh delegate, led the Leftist 78 group drive for public-sector spending to regenerate the economy, supported by workers' collectives and co-operatives. He said the private sector had failed. The option for a mixed economy no longer existed in Scotland.

The conference reflected concern over rival takeover bids for the Royal Bank of Scotland by the Standard and Chartered group and the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, now before the Monopolies Commission.

Engineering orders still low despite improvement

BY ALAN PIKE

ENGINEERING ORDERS and sales remain low despite a significant improvement in new orders at the beginning of this year, according to figures in British Business, the magazine of the department of trade and industry, yesterday.

The improvement in orders must be treated with caution, because it reflects some once-and-for-all export orders in February.

However, the Department of Industry says there are signs that the sharp fall in export sales at the end of last year may be slowing down, although there are no clear signs yet of an imminent upturn.

New orders for the machine tool industry remain very depressed. Seasonally adjusted total sales from December to February were 20 per cent lower than in the previous three months.

British Aluminium prices to rise

BRITISH ALUMINIUM is to raise the price of certain semi-fabricated products in order to "reduce losses," the company has announced.

Semi-fabricated, rolled and extruded products are to go up by 2 per cent for despatch on June 8. As a result price of

months. The volume of monthly sales is now little more than half that of 1975.

• Lisa Wood writes: Order books in the footwear industry continued to be depressed in the first two months of this year according to other British Business figures.

New orders were 10 per cent lower in the three months to the end of February, compared with the previous three months. Orders on hand at the end of February were, however, 3 per cent higher than in November 1980 while the index of output in the three months was 2 per cent lower compared with the three months ended November 1980.

Deliveries during the three-month period were estimated to be 4 per cent higher on a seasonally adjusted basis compared with the previous three months.

Electrical staff seek big rise

BY OUR LABOUR STAFF

UNION LEADERS of about 40,000 professional, administrative and clerical staff in the electrical power industry are to meet employers next week to press for a substantial pay increase. They want the increase to take account of this year's 13 per cent award to the industry's manual workers.

The National and Local Government Officers Association, the main union representing the staff group, said yesterday it had rejected an offer of

To: Henderson Unit Trust Management Ltd, Dealing Department, 5, Rayleigh Road, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex CM11 1AA. Tel: 01-588 3622.

I/We wish to buy _____ units in Henderson Global Technology Trust at the fixed price of 54.6p per unit (minimum initial investment 1,000 units).

I/We enclose a remittance of £_____ payable to Henderson Unit Trust Management Limited.

This offer will close on 5th June, 1981, or earlier at Managers discretion. After the close of this offer units will be available at the daily quoted price.

This offer is not available to residents of the Republic of Ireland.

THE WEEK IN THE MARKETS

Your call, heads I win

IT IS becoming quite game. The trick is to pick the next company launching a big rights issue. The field is usually rather limited and the rules do not require that much skill but the rights issue pipeline is wide open and the demands already imposed on institutional cash groups have had a sharply dampening influence on stock market behaviour almost every day this month.

Either by accident or design, and one hesitates to venture an opinion, the City has been pretty well on target so far. The Guardian Royal Exchange cash call was the last kept secret but it was hardly better distinguished than the £2m rights from BOG International. It may be fair to say that BOG's issue could have been predicted on the fundamentals and there was also a suspicious change in the date of the results announcement, as though BOG had been squeezing its way into the rights issue queue.

The competition gets harder now on. The market is convinced that it will see a rights in the region of £12m next Tuesday. Whether this is inspired guesswork or some unfortunate leak is difficult to say. Trading was knocked for six throughout much of yesterday afternoon and while new share buying has generally been such a bull point over the past few months, its impact this time has been negligible.

The rights issue candidates list comprises at least four names and probably several more. A bank, an oil company and a stores group have all

been muted. It would not hurt the market if just this once its predictions prove some way off the mark. At any rate June and July contains sufficient large, and probably cash-hungry industrial groups to keep the pot boiling for some time.

Bond substitute

The call issued on Tuesday by BOG International to raise £2m brings the rights issue total for this month alone to £850m. That compares with an aggregate of only £150m in the first quarter of this year.

The outline of BOG's proposal had been about as common a currency in the city as the Guardian Royal Exchange cash call in the previous week. BOG shares have performed strongly over the last year but the group has been carrying a hefty burden of floating rate debt. Around two-thirds of its £490m net borrowing is not fixed and, despite its frequent denials, if any funding plans over recent months, BOG is now taking its opportunity for substantial re-scheduling.

It is asking shareholders to subscribe for £1 nominal of 9 per cent convertible loan stock 2001-6 at par for every four ordinary shares held. Given that it is currently paying 12 pence in the UK and between 15 and 20 per cent on the other side of the Atlantic to service its debt, the interest saving should be worth at least 24m annually.

BOG made it plain that funding by this method was very

much a second choice. It had been planning, it said, to go to the international bond market three months ago but this idea was stymied by the sharp rise in U.S. interest rates. Its hopes of a sterling loan stock launch on the London market in April also proved premature.

Although its interim profits performance, after full replacement cost depreciation, showed only modest improvement the group is still forecasting "substantial growth" for the whole year.

Much of the implicit second half acceleration will be generated abroad. Cost savings benefits have already been coming through quite well in the UK and domestic operations as a whole put on 25 per cent growth. It will, however, be pruning its labour force further and the total redundancy bill is expected to approach £10m, weighted towards the second six months, and charged above the line.

The major U.S. subsidiary, Alcoa, was rather flat at the half-year mark but that is partly explained by the second quarter strike in the carbon-graphite division, which usually produces the best divisional return on improvement for the year as a whole. But nobody seems to be sure how the group will put its restructuring businesses together to produce sustainable long-term growth. The high commodity trading content is still very much uppermost on many investors' minds.

The half-time improvement, unveiled during the week, owed a lot to loss elimination in the starch activities, cutting out a deficit of about £2m, and to a 3.4m rise in North American refining returns.

The earnings mix has changed quite substantially with the commodity trading operations now putting in about 40 per cent, including molasses, against some two-thirds last year.

The returns from refining are expected to improve in the wake of the Liverpool closure and the group should be able to cover the cost of the shutdown from ship disposals. The group has calculated that Liverpool will save about £10m annually although that may now depend on a good, and maintainable, level of refinery volume.

Last year's profits of £30.7m pre-tax should be beatable, but the longer term poses several questions. One of the central points will be the result of the S & W Berisford bid for British Sugar Corporation. If the latest

encouraging contributions from South Africa and Australia are set to expand further.

That suggests to many analysts that total profits will be something better than £10m ahead of last year's £61.1m which indicates current cost earnings of at least 12.5p per share.

Partly because the rights was a little tighter than expected and partly because some of the underwriters may have been looking to reduce their overall exposure in BOG shares, the price has been quite volatile since the terms were announced. It is possible that earnings per share will be flat, on a fully diluted basis, for one or two years.

Hoare Govett, the broking firm which follows the company, believes that the convertible should command a premium when the ordinary shares are priced above 126p, assuming 10 per cent annual dividend growth. BOG is putting the interim up by a tenth and, without wishing to be drawn too strongly, says that the expected second half buoyancy should be a reasonable indication of the full year distribution.

The dominant issue, however,

is still the group's ability to boost its non-trading activities to cover any fluctuation in commodity dealing income.

The hope is that the régime of successful slimming, having kept the balance sheet in reasonable shape, will enable Tate to keep boasting on its non-trading operations on an orderly basis.

Berisford's pursuit

Having attracted only 2.21 per cent of British Sugar Corporation shares with its recent offer, S. and W. Berisford quickly rolled out an 18 per cent higher bid on Thursday that values BOG at £201m.

BOG shareholders are offered either 338p in cash or 2.75 Berisford shares or 335p nominal of loan stock. Although the cash bid is 60 per cent higher than the original offer

it is still in spite of budgetary economies in other departments, reduce the pace of growth in Treasury borrowing demands.

These demands put pressure on the credit markets, which put pressure on interest rates across the board, which puts pressure on inflation.

It is not the place of this column to pass judgment on this debate, a fortunate position to be in, since no one knows who is right.

But President Reagan ought not to be quite so ungrateful about what Wall Street is saying and doing.

Take the stock market, for example. As this week closed the Dow Jones Industrial Average was rambling along rather cheerfully in the high 900s. There was even evidence, after a few weeks of rather

improved offer is successful, that marketing policies will the merged group pursue and where the major change leave T & L. The City will be looking closely, too, at Tate's ability to cover its fixed and working capital requirements from internal resources following a long period in which its finances have been augmented by substantial asset disposals.

However, Berisford is also painting a pretty gloomy picture of BOG's business and investors may well wonder why it would wish to pay more.

In his statement on Thursday, Mr. E. S. Margulies, Berisford chairman, attacked the BOG board's policy of not increasing sugar production. This could lead only to a decline in profits unless prices were raised, and that would attract import competition.

BOG shares gained 2p yesterday to 337p which suggests some confidence that Berisford will raise its offer yet again.

The Government is unlikely

to veto its 24 per cent stake in BOG until the issue is decided.

Only 13 per cent of BOG shares are held by individuals while the institutions do not seem likely to sell for much less than 340p a share. Berisford's own stake rose fractionally yesterday to slightly more than 10 per cent following market purchases said to be at prices up to 335p.

A glass darkly

NEW YORK

IAN HARGREAVES

torpid trading, that the big spenders—the institutions—were back in the market place getting ready for the next phase of the economic cycle.

The point, however, is not so much this week's brightness, or last week's nervousness, so much as to pay court, or to have Mr. Reagan recognise the fact that although his policies (leaving Henry Kaufman out of it for a second) have produced a wave of interest rate increases as potentially devastating as anything Mr. Carter managed in the spring of 1980, the stock market has, as football coaches say here, "hung in there."

When Mr. Carter got tough with the credit markets, the Dow dropped like a stone to the mid 700s. Since Mr. Reagan was elected, the Dow has not gone below 900 and in the last few months it has held its own comfortably above the 950 mark.

This is in spite of the fact that there has been no evidence of any improvement in the underlying rate of inflation.

The fact that the stock market has proved itself to be a Republican gentleman, albeit a nervous one, has also had more benefit than the psychological one. Higher stock prices have made it easier for companies to issue new stock to raise capital to import competition.

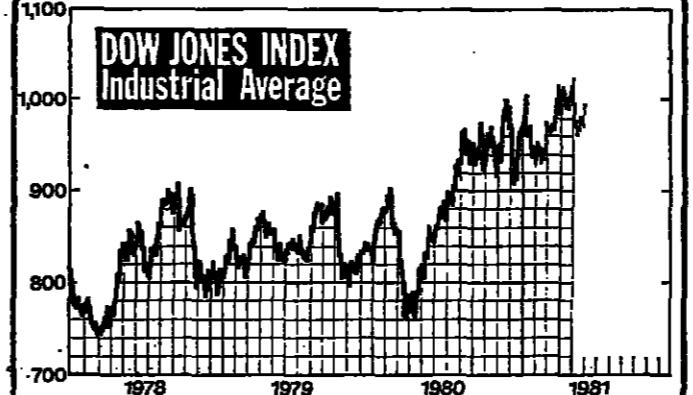
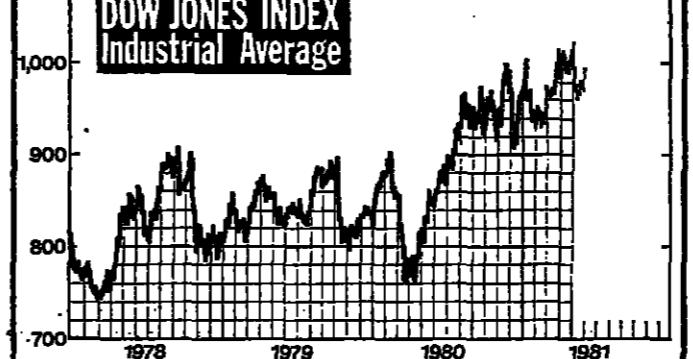
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MARKET HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

	Price y'day	Change on week	1981 High	1981 Low	
F.T. Ind. Ord. Index	542.5	-0.9	597.3	446.0	Interest in secondary stocks
F.T. Govt. Secs. Index	67.67	+1.17	70.61	66.39	Int. rates/yield considerations
BAT Inds.	347	+20	362	230	Investment support
Bearcat	470	+150	470	140	Speculative demand
Cawoods	219	+25	229	174	Bid speculation
De Beers Defd.	394	-15	418	340	Cutback in diamond production
Exel	212	+24	212	165	Second-half profits recovery
Hill (Charles)	102	+10	108	40	Consolidation bid
Int. Paint	125	+15	125	74	Excellent results
Mercantile House	755	-33	815	535	Profit-taking
Plessey	302	+16	336	255	Rally in defence stocks
Spring Grove	101	-12	121	96	Disappointing results
Tanks	313	-27	375	228	Fading bid hopes
Tunnel B	440	-10	450	236	Counter-bid hopes fade
UBM	60	-5	79	52	Poor results, dividend cut
Western Mining	310	+20	310	227	Canning Basin oil interests
Whim Creek	64	+16	76	46	Speculative buying
Withbread A	183	+11	183	134	Press comment
Wimpey (G.)	117	+6	129	80	Talk of property revaluation
Young Brewery A	228	+15	228	180	Property revaluation

Calling the tune in Kimberley

JUST WHEN signs of a tentative improvement in sales of certain types of smaller diamonds at the retail end of the market have begun to appear, South Africa's De Beers diamond giant has warned that the gem market as a whole is far from being out of the wood yet.

Mr. Harry Oppenheimer, the De Beers chairman, has said at this week's meeting at the head office in Kimberley that weakness in demand centres has intensified and as a result "considerable stocks are being accumulated." Furthermore: "We do not anticipate any improvement until well into the second half of this year."

Consequently, De Beers is temporarily reducing its production "to some extent." Allowing for the cloak and dagger secrecy which has long characterised this exotic market, the cutback looks like being of the order of 5 per cent and will probably be most marked in the production of the larger gem stones of over one carat—the "investment" category—which are not selling at all well at the moment.

But let us put things into perspective. De Beers is not down to its last few millions. As Mr. Oppenheimer stressed: "The financial strength and diversified investments of the company enable us to meet these difficult conditions in the knowledge that we will be able to sustain the stability of the market and the price of dia-

monds until general economic conditions improve."

The group's Central Selling Organisation handles the marketing of over 80 per cent of the world's rough (uncut) diamond production from its own mines and those of others. The CSO buys a guaranteed minimum quantity of rough diamonds from the producers and regulates the sale of the stones to the diamond market so

that will provide an annual output capacity of around 19m carats by 1983 compared with 14.7m carats last year.

Of course, money tied up in diamond stocks does not pay interest—as those tempted to buy diamonds for investment should be aware—and this together with a likely lower income from diamond sales and possibly also from gold and other investments (De Beers is

YOUR SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS-1

A preserved position

BY OUR LEGAL STAFF

FINANCE AND THE FAMILY

I am currently unemployed, and under the terms of my former employer's "contracted out" pension scheme I am only entitled to a deferred pension (I am now 31 years of age) or a transfer in the scheme of a new employer. I am now contemplating working for myself, possibly only part-time. Would it be possible to transfer the actuarial interest in my former employer's scheme to a pension scheme established for myself, either as a self-employed or as a part-time employee of a company established for that purpose?

There is no choice. A transfer value—including Guaranteed Minimum Pension Rights—can only be made to another contractor scheme prepared to accept the transfer. A transfer value could be paid in respect of the excess but given your age this is unlikely to be significant. You will therefore receive a preserved pension and you might take comfort from the thought that your GMP will be inflation protected. You must contribute for future service either to a new self-employed policy or to a new company scheme.

Water for house and shop

I have a house and shop combined in one building. The shop and the house are separately rated. I have therefore (following reading a letter and reply of yours, re: Water Rates and a Garage) redirected the water and sewage rates for the shop as there is no water or sewage connection. However the water company maintain as it is possible to enter the house from the shop. "The Aggregation of RV is allowed by S.46(1A) Sch. II Water Act 1945." Do you think this is right? I am prepared to "block up" the access to the house from the shop if necessary.

We do not think that the attempt to apply the Water Act 1945 is justified. However, it may be cheaper to close the access from the shop than to pursue the dispute as to the application of the statute.

Tax in theory and practice

My son, who has been working in Canada for two years is now resident there—still retains a bank account here. He recently sent back C\$15,000 which has been put into a dollar deposit account in his name with the bank.

Does he have to file a tax return now in this country? Is he liable to UK tax? The answer to both questions is probably no, in practice (but could be yes in theory). You will find general guidance in two free booklets, obtainable from most tax inspectors' offices: IR1—Extrastutory concessions; IR20—Residents and non-residents: liability to tax in the UK. Your son can lawfully tell the bank not to report his interest to the UK tax authorities.

South African dividends and tax

I am not domiciled although at present regarded as resident and ordinarily resident in the UK. I have some South African securities bought on the London Stock Exchange the proceeds of which are remitted to my account with a Bank in Jersey and not remitted to the UK.

The Inspector of Foreign Dividends has agreed that tax would not normally be deductible (vide IR booklet 20, para. 46) from a person not domiciled in UK and on income from non-UK source and not remitted. But he has refused to grant my request for exemption on the ground that income derived from dividends is paid through a UK paying agent and therefore the relevant income must be remitted. What can I do about this?

If your sister has not been required to pay a rent for the house her family or dependants will have to leave it on her death; and the trustees of your Aunt's will must insist that vacant possession is given to you (if you survive your sister), and must obtain a court order for possession if necessary.

Husband's claim on house

Under the terms of my Aunt's will, my sister was left a house to live in, which then passes back to me. My sister has lived in this house for the past 10 years and her husband has announced that he wants to sell the house in the event of the prior death of my sister.

He will not leave. What is the position please?

If your sister has not been required to pay a rent for the house her family or dependants will have to leave it on her death; and the trustees of your Aunt's will must insist that vacant possession is given to you (if you survive your sister), and must obtain a court order for possession if necessary.

A Proving executor

Along with a solicitor I was a friend's executor and have just heard from his widow that all formalities relating to probate have been completed by the solicitor. Should I not have been consulted and if the will were challenged could I be held in any way responsible?

If you are named as an executor (not as a substitute executor) the solicitor should not have proved the will without consulting you. However, you will not be liable in any way if you are not shown on the act of Probate as a proving executor. You should require confirmation that you are not so shown.

Friendly Society and investors

What please is a "Friendly Society"? Do such societies offer any advantage to investors in connection with taxation?

A friendly society is now usually incorporated under the Friendly Societies Act 1974. It is non-profit making and subject to control of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, to whom annual returns must be made.

The objects of such a society must be the mutual insurance or provision of mutual benefits for its members. Apart from tax advantages on life assurance business, it does not attract tax concessions, although it may also be a charity and attract concessions in that respect.

A hammered stockbroker

I am a client of a recently hammered stockbroker, and have a credit balance of nearly £500 in my account with them. I have written a letter to the Official Assignee drawing his attention to this. Are there any other steps to take?

We think that the notification of your claim to the Official Assignee is the only practical

Each occupier of our block of flats pays £600 a year for maintenance. We have a small committee of residents. When some of us ask for details of the budget for the coming year and details of the janitor's duties we are told that neither the committee nor the managing agents agree that these figures should be circulated. Is not this contrary to the Housing Act, 1980? Also when we inquire about contracts for major repair works, we are told by

the managing agents that they only take instructions from their principals, i.e. the ground landlords? Have we no rights here?

You are entitled to see the accounts for a year in respect of which a service charge is claimed, but you may not be entitled to see a projected budget used as the basis for interim payments sought in advance.

The contract for repairs must be entered into by the landlords, so they are entitled to decide on whether and what contract to accept, but they must consult with the tenants where the statutory limits for the estimated cost are exceeded.

Shares and CGT

My mother wishes to make me a gift of part of a holding of shares worth about £9,500 which in April 1980 were worth £3,840. I am advised that if she gives me half and then both of us sell separately, each can take advantage of the £3,000 per annum allowance. Is this correct, or are there any snags? For Capital Transfer Tax purposes, can any allowance be made for the Capital Gains Tax inherent in the shares when transferred?

Yes, what you have been told appears to be correct. To escape Capital Gains Tax your mother should not sell her half of the shares in the same tax year as she makes the gift to you. For Capital Transfer Tax purposes, the shares will be transferred at their market value.

If your sister has not been required to pay a rent for the house her family or dependants will have to leave it on her death; and the trustees of your Aunt's will must insist that vacant possession is given to you (if you survive your sister), and must obtain a court order for possession if necessary.

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YOUR SAVINGS AND INVESTMENTS - 2

Tim Dickson unravels a bit of City jargon

Yielding to the yield gap

INVESTORS CONFUSED by the seemingly erratic movement of UK share prices—the FT Index bounded up almost to 600 before falling back to its present level around 540—may find some enlightenment in the accompanying chart.

It depicts what is known as the reverse yield gap, a familiar bit of City shorthand for the difference between the average yield available on gilt edged securities (as measured by 25 year high coupon stocks) and the average yield available on shares (as measured by the FT Actuaries All Share Index).

The fact that it is known as the "reverse" yield gap is a grim commentary on inflation. Once upon a time when the world was a little more innocent and rapidly rising prices did not loom large in our expectations, investors were prepared to lend money to the Government in exchange for a lower return than they could achieve through equities. At a time of relatively stable prices low single figure yields on Government stock could provide a satisfactory real return.

Equities, by contrast, were more risky. Dividends might well go up but equally they could easily go down and to compensate for this worry investors demanded higher nominal reward. Hence the existence of a yield gap.

As inflation gathered pace, however, it became clear that the fixed coupons on gilt edged stock offered poor deal relative to the income from equities which in theory at any rate, would rise in line with prices as companies passed on the extra costs to their customers. These future increases from dividends were increasingly taken into the equation and, perversely no doubt for those at the time, a reverse yield gap developed as a result. Since then it has widened, albeit jerkily, so that today the difference between the yield on equities and gilts is an historically high 8½ per centage points.

This may seem a trifling difference given current economic policies. Company profits are under severe pressure from high interest rates and a low level

of demand—stockbrokers Phillips and Drew are anticipating overall dividend increases this year of only 5 per cent—whereas the Government is still apparently firmly committed to control of the money supply and further reductions in inflation.

The answer to this apparent paradox is that markets are taking a medium rather than a short term view. Most commentators, for example, are sceptical about the Government's ability to hold inflation in single figures for more than a few months, fearing that the economic recovery when it comes and the inevitable pre-election boost to the economy will undo much or at least some of the good work.

In addition, as Mr Peter Scott, the economist at stockbrokers Carr Sebag points out, the Government's efforts to contain the money supply has forced it to issue a flood of new gilt edged stocks which have the effect of taking liquidity out of the system.

Equities, meanwhile, put on their recent spurt partly thanks to technical reasons—jobbers, for example, were caught short of stock—but partly because the market suddenly decided that the omens for future profitability (and thus dividend increases) were increasingly bright.

As Mr Tim Brown at Phillips and Drew points out, "Most of the times when we have had high reverse yield gaps in the past equities have come down. It was certainly a pointer."

The feeling in the City now is that gilts will have to make further progress before equities was replaced by the view that the economy had indeed turned bottom but that it could well remain there. The stream of

rights issues, meanwhile, sorted out the supply problem but just as importantly, caution set in with the widening of the reverse yield gap.

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can begin their next assault on the 500 barrier.

Not so capital . . .

SAVERS IN the past few months have been earnestly wooed by building society offers of high interest rates for money which is locked up for three, four or even five years. Those who wish to get at their funds in an unexpected hurry, however, might well find the tax position somewhat irritating when the time comes.

Literally hundreds of millions of pounds have been pouring into these types of investment, the most notable example being the £150m scooped up by the first issue of the Abbey National's Sixty Plus Bond scheme.

This was the offer which took on the Government's gravy bonds head first, guaranteeing a juicy 3 percentage points more than the recommended ordinary share rate if the money remained untouched for six years.

It has since been repeated with second and third issues, offering respectively 2½ and 2 per centage points over the ordinary share rate for six years.

Like many similar but less spectacular schemes from other building societies, the Abbey National provides a let out for anyone who suddenly decides that they cannot stay the course. Unlike some rivals which simply pay the going society's rate for the number of years the money has been invested, however, Abbey National says in its prospectus that savers will lose the whole three (or 2½ or 2) point advantage and will receive no more than the ordinary share rate over the relevant period.

In effect, this means that it will claw back interest which was paid in earlier years at the more generous rate. Take the simple example of a widowed granny who put £5,000 into the first issue of Abbey National Sixty Plus Bonds when they were first introduced last November. Each half year she will receive income at the rate of the building society ordinary share rate plus three percentage points—equivalent to 11.5 per cent at

the moment. At the beginning of year five, immediately after an interest payment, she is forced through unforeseen circumstances to withdraw the money which is locked up for three, four or even five years. Those who wish to get at their funds in an unexpected hurry, however, might well find the tax position somewhat irritating when the time comes.

The clawback of the extra three points over five years is equivalent to no less than £750 with the result that the return of her original capital comes after the deduction of this amount. She therefore ends up with only £4,250.

Some of this £750 would, of course, be knocked off any earned but as yet unpaid interest but assuming some has to be deducted from capital, there are two tax consequences.

• The first is that any previous tax paid on interest received in earlier years cannot be reclaimed. In other words, if the widow in our example had a top marginal tax rate of 40 per cent or was subject to the investment income surcharge, she would have had to pay more than 30 per cent deducted at source by the building society. In effect she would have been paying tax on money which was not ultimately received.

• If the reduction in capital caused by this "loss" of income was allowable for capital gains tax purposes, this could constitute some form of compensation. Although the Inland Revenue has not yet had any test cases, it is apparently highly unlikely that this will be allowed. Building society investments are in the Revenue's eyes "sterling cash" and this is specifically excluded from the operation of capital gains tax. At least one tax expert in the City, however, sees no reason why this cannot qualify as a capital loss.

Although Abbey National does say in the prospectus that income tax already paid is not recoverable, it has not yet clarified the capital gains tax position with the Inland Revenue.

T.D.

ACTIVITY IN the unit trust world is increasingly frantic and new business records are being set every month. April's figures showed total sales of £107.45m—even stripping out the £4m worth of unitised investment trust assets this is comfortably the highest figure ever recorded—and repurchases (£1m cashed in) during the month of £47.25m. This is also high historically but with a new record for net new investment of £60.15m it will take more than summer showers to dampen managers' spirits at the moment.

In the unit trust field Henderson and GT have already pulled in £15m and £4m respectively in the past couple of months—not to mention the new investment trusts in this field—but S and P is nonetheless convinced that public demand is still there.

Save and Prosper points to the good performances of its Japan Growth and U.S. Growth funds in the past 12 months both have a bias towards high technology—and the three investment managers who will be contributing ideas to the fund talk drooling about new biotechnological techniques, electronic warfare and of course, micro computers.

Save and Prosper's Exploration Fund—launched late last year when oil exploration and the recent boom were all the rage—has no more than marked time in its first six-seven months. Admittedly the relevant indices have all fallen at least 20 per cent but it shows the potential dangers to investors of jumping on the bandwagon just before the excitement temporarily perhaps dies down.

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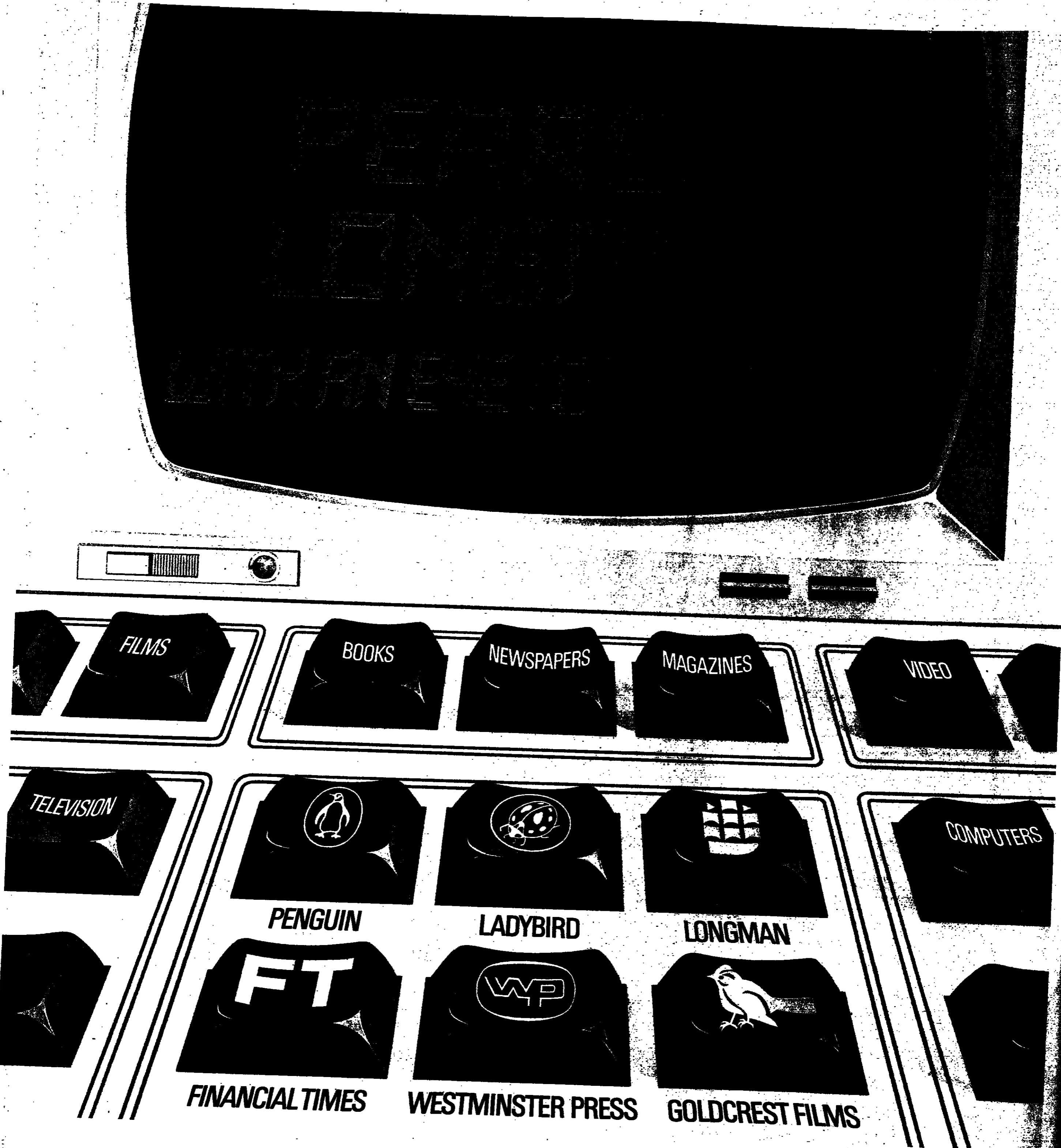
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Britain's leading publishing group

1980 was a difficult year for British publishing. Our profits, like those of most of our competitors, have suffered badly, but we believe that we have weathered the storm better than most. We remain confident about our prospects for profitable growth in the 1980's.

Year in brief

During 1980 the Financial Times continued to gain readership in Europe and the Frankfurt edition has reached a key stage in its development. Longman did well to increase its sales despite severe public expenditure cuts at home and the strong pound abroad. Penguin and Viking have together returned to profitability. Westminster Press made a major newspaper acquisition in Florida and Pearson Longman Films became a leading partner in an expanded Goldcrest, Britain's largest independent feature film enterprise.

The future in focus

During the year we completed a major review of our competitive position and established a new strategy for the rest of the 1980's.

Although we believe that many of our traditional markets will continue to expand, certain other favourable trends are already well-established. Most important of these are the new market opportunities created by developments in the electronic storage and distribution of information, and the development of cable television and video. It is here that we shall be committing an increasingly significant part of our energies and investment.

Several of our companies are already involved in these new areas. Longman and The Financial Times in the specialist market sector are expanding their interests in electronic

publishing and video tapes and discs. In future years communities we serve will benefit from teletext systems and cable television programming provided by Westminster Press. We will enlarge our interest in the visual media through Goldcrest and Penguin and other new ventures in television programming and video publishing.

Giving a lead

We are preparing plans to invest in a number of new initiatives over the next few years to broaden our portfolio of businesses and to develop our position in the United States. This will enable us to enter new markets and improve our growth potential. In this way we aim to retain our leadership over our British competitors and become world leaders in our chosen fields.

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HOW TO SPEND IT IN NEW YORK

If you have decided that this is the year to take advantage of Mr Laker and the strength of the pound then this week the How To Spend It page (with help from Arthur Sandles) offers a guide to some of the pleasures of Manhattan.

THOUGH THE British have got used to the discovery that it's not only as cheap to get to New York as many European tourists there are usually even more delighted when they discover that it's also a great deal cheaper to stay there once they're actually arrived. Food, hotels and a whole range of goods in the shops seem often to give "twice the value for half the price."

Before you start shopping or browsing through the suggestions below there are a few general points to be made. First remember that all over the States a sales tax is charged—in Manhattan it is 8 per cent—so the price on the tag is not the price you'll end up paying. Secondly, New York is one of the best places in the world for bargains so if you mind about getting the keenest price you can do what the New Yorkers do and shop around. Sales seem to be a year-long phenomenon—not because things don't sell but more because the pace of change is faster.

New Yorkers are renowned label snobs and those in the know check their labels out in the posh Fifth Avenue shops and then go off to Macy's or the mass of jumble shops on the Lower East Side to buy them at a fraction of the price.

The big stores are not to be missed—even if you, like the natives, do your shopping later in downtown Manhattan. Shops like Bergdorf Goodman, Bloomingdale's, Bonwit Teller, Altman's and the like offer services that we don't even dream about here—very often they'll alter clothes on the spot, give you the services of a "personal shopper" to show you around if you want it.

If you have a major credit

card you can open a charge account on the spot and this usually gives you at least six months free credit as it takes that long for the bills to reach this side.

Some of the best buys in New York are clothes. Obviously most of the American designers, currently producing some of the most sophisticated, wearable clothes around and much sought-after by the European market, will be better value in the States besides which you'll find a much larger choice. Names to look out for are Perry Ellis, Anne Klein, Calvin Klein (though only his American-made garments are cheaper over there, the silk numbers made in Hong Kong are apparently cheaper here as they come direct), Ralph Lauren, Halston.

To come down to earth (in terms of price)—cotton sweaters could have been designed specially to cope with the vagaries of an English summer and you will find a larger, brighter selection over there at lower prices, than anybody can offer back home.

American stationery is also something special—marvellous colours and designs and makes very good presents to bring home. Underwear, lingerie and resort clothes (in particular swimwear) also seems so much better over there—more appealing designs, in better fabrics and at attractive prices.

American bed linen, sheets and towels are well-known for the brightness of their designs, the quality of the material used (in particular percale), that much-to-be-praised material that washes smooth and clean without requiring an iron, and the prices. But remember their

strings are different (so go armed with measurements) and they don't do duvet covers. They do, however, offer a whole range of mysterious items with names like comforters and bolster covers and should you fancy the chic Manhattan look to your bedroom (i.e. the whole thing tastefully co-ordinated till you can hardly tell bed from curtains) then you'll be able to buy it lock, stock and barrel.

Sunday is the great day for visiting the discount houses on the Lower East Side. Most of the shop owners are Jewish and have spent their Sabbath resting and return revived to the fray on Sunday. In the section of the city around Orchard Street you can find any number of shops with names like Cohen's (Ezra Cohen is particularly hot on bed linens but it may be Eldridge Textiles and Franco Textiles just nearby have the designs you've been coveting). Prices are keen and the tourist will relish the accents which seem straight out of all those Kojak movies.

One thing is certain, Sundays in Orchard Street seem a long way from home.

RIGHT: In simplified form is a map of the main areas in Manhattan covered by the page this week. For easy identification we've marked just a few of the main tourist districts—like Little Italy, Chinatown and so on.

MIDDLE: In this part of town everything comes at a discount. I found Calvin Klein jeans at \$26, silk ties at \$5, bought double sheets at \$18

each, found a Diane von Furstenberg silk jumpsuit at \$100. You can find luggage, designer handbags, fine crystal—you name it, it'll be cheaper here. Myopic friends tell me that particularly good value is to be found at the opticians where prescription glasses come at a fraction of the cost and in double-quick time.

But—you need stamina and your wits about you. Nothing is laid out like it is in the grand stores. As one native New Yorker said to me, "In this part of town you should check everything out. If a label is missing don't assume it was ever there—ask. Make sure if goods are regular or seconds. Be prepared to wade through the racks of squashed together clothes and you'll come upon some marvellous buys."

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ARTS

Earthbound

BY B. A. YOUNG

Raymond Fitzsimon's programme about Houdini on Radio 4 last Sunday never strayed into speculation. Yet it really is a matter where speculation is called for. Houdini, born Harry Houdini, from New York, became an escapist of such skill that spiritualists were convinced that he was secretly dematerialising himself to slip off the chains, locks, handcuffs and other restraints he was fitted with. Houdini, a simple Jewish boy, was an ideal target for psychic evangelists; his mother's death upset him so much that he used constantly to lie on her grave and talk to her in the hope that she would talk back, which she never did.

Conan Doyle, the inventor of Sherlock Holmes, was forefront in the spiritualist ranks, and he and Houdini became good friends. Doyle gave him a list of recommended mediums, and Houdini found them all fraudulent. Doyle's wife went into a trance and produced pages of automatic writing; but as they held nothing more persuasive than vague messages about the charms of the afterworld, as they were headed with a cross when Houdini was a Jew, and as Mother Houdini, who had learnt English in the next world, had forgotten that she was coming through on what had been her birthday, she was not very convincing.

When Houdini himself died (as the result of a careless blow from a student when he was demonstrating how to fake spirit effects) he left a codeword with his wife. No one ever cracked it. There the story ends. It was interestingly put over by Lee Montague as Houdini, Miriam Margolyes as his wife Bess (unexpectedly surfacing two hours later as Mrs. Beetle in *Cold Comfort Farm*) and James Grouse as Conan Doyle. But was there no more to say beyond the cold facts of the case?

Doyle had certainly become eccentric by that time of his life. A few years later he wrote articles in the Strand Magazine about fairies, with photographs of the little things perching in the garden. But was he honest with his dealings with psychic affairs? After all, Sir William Crookes, a more eminent man than Doyle, was a blatant cheat in his. Or, on a less demonstrable level, was Houdini honest about them? There were spiritualists who claimed they had evidence that he had practised some psychic short cut in making his marvellous escapes. Well, *Death and the*

Magician, to give the catchpenny title, was only a narrative programme, not an investigation. An investigation might have been even more interesting.

Some afterthoughts about *Having a Ball*, which was last week's contribution from Radio Theatre 81. Vasectomy is not an obvious theme for a comedy, but it proved a useful one. When what is virtually licensed, mayhem is readily available, the more the public thinks about it, the better; *Having a Ball* is about four men awaiting the operation in a private clinic where it is as easily available as abortions for the other sex, and they are not all equally serious about it. What could be more reasonable than to have an open discussion about the question, and what medium better than comedy? Alan Bleasdale has been high on my list of preferred playwrights since I saw a piece called *Fat Harold* and the *Last 26*, and there's nothing more frivolous than vague messages about the charms of the afterworld, as they were headed with a cross when Houdini was a Jew, and as Mother Houdini, who had learnt English in the next world, had forgotten that she was coming through on what had been her birthday, she was not very convincing.

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Love Bites

BY MICHAEL COVENY

With the TV transmission of Mike Leigh's *Abigail's Party* and the current runaway commercial success of the same auteur's *Goose Pimples*, it is becoming harder by the day for the sceptics to ignore the claims of improvisational drama as a powerful agent of social comment and detailed cultural observation.

Love Bites at the ICA Theatre in London is a touching, fresh, very funny and well-acted play devised by an author, Chris Hawes, from hours of tape-recorded conversations with the cast of four and the director, Nicholas Broadhurst. The initial subject concerns how single, lonely young people in London strike out in hope through the *Lonely Hearts* column of *Time Out* magazine. It develops into a delightful comedy of nervous encounters and, on a more serious level, of the sexual urges the instincts of the two girls.

The piece is unfashionably feminist in that it does admit some valid sexual function for men: Susan and Joanna both have long speeches about sexual experience that are neither sentimental nor contrived.

There are technical problems in Act Two, where neither too many men behave unbelievably badly in too short a time—the structural balance has not been worked out between the leisurely, probing comedy of the scenes where the girls meet the boys who have answered the advertisements and the telescoped accounts of previous relationships.

The performances, especially that of Kay Adshad as Susan the working-class girl from the



Kay Adshad and Andrew Greenhalgh

North, are so good, and the appeal of the show so honest and direct, one's quibbles simmer and die down. Susan is on the canteen staff of W. H. Smith by day, on the aisle of the Academy Cinema tearing tickets by night. Her opposite number, Joanna (Rossall Adler), has been through Roedean and Cambridge and is now an account executive with J. Walter Thompson. The loneliness of bedit land knows no class barriers.

The characters act out scenes within a framework of the girls' stories delivered to us in conversational narrative. This is

ENO Golden Jubilee Gala

BY MAX LOPPERT

Fifty years ago, Lilian Baylis began her heroic adventure at the Old Vic. The story of how her operatic enterprise was transformed, from Vic-Wells Opera through Sadler's Wells Opera to English National Opera, has often been told; but an occasion such as Thursday's Gala at the Coliseum in the presence of the Queen and Prince Philip in celebration of that half century (and in aid of the company's Jubilee Appeal) affords a good chance to reflect once more on the meaning of that story. Critics write sternly of individual ENO failures and upstartishness of success; yet most of us always write in the clear understanding that this is now one of the world's most remarkable and valuable exercises in *Volkssoper*, which means, of course, that there are few operatic exercises more remarkable or valuable.

The programme of the evening was expertly chosen, both to stimulate such reflection and to propagate pleasure—the latter by no means always the case at galas. Four substantial excerpts from four carefully contrasted operas, rather than the usual shower of

operatic sugar-candy, made for an exceptionally satisfying compilation. Satisfying, too, in that it was tantalising: surely there was more than one newcomer to the house who, having sampled such impressively served draughts of *La Bohème*, *Don Carlos*, *Peter Grimes*, and *Die Fledermaus*, will want to catch the company's complete performances of those operas when they next come around.

Grimes, chosen also for its talismanic significance (it began the company's post-war chapter so exhilaratingly), has been out of the repertory for some while; as the ENO now possesses a *Grimes* of real theatrical force in Alberto Remedios (as well as the services of such eloquent Britten singers as Ava June, Norman Bailey, Geoffrey Chard, Anna Collins, and Shalagh Squires), it would be impractical to keep our newcomer waiting for that staging too long. The excerpt was the storm and pub scene, lit up by Charles Mackerras (former musical director, sharing podium duties with the current, Mark Elder), chorus, and orchestra with hair-raising vigour. Sir Charles' other assignment was to draw

from the *Fledermaus* Act 2 finale more than the usual ENO jollity; old friends—Mackay, Hill, Smith, Belcourt, Opie, Shilling, etc.—were on stage, but shedding an unfamiliar corporate sparkle.

Mr. Elder had charge over the Italian opera, and fulfilled it with his special kind of fine-nerved sympathy—he knows how to make the *Bohème* Act 3 spacious without drooping, and how to tap to the full the solenn unburdened grandeur of the *Carlos* first scene of Act 4. The company's leading singing-actresses—Josephine Barstow (Alm), Linda Ester Gray (Elizabeth de Valois), a touch-brief reminder of Louis McDonald's ravishing high-style *Musetta*—were in fine form: John Treleaven and Christian da Plessis sang *Puccini* with an almost Italianate tonal flourish; and in Verdi's ferocious debate between church and throne, John Tomlinson (*Inquisitor*) and Richard Van Allan (*Philip*) were nobly matched. For more than just the reason of unusually clear diction from all participants, it was an evening to show that opera in English is not a pious artistic delusion, but a joyous fact of life.

Karajan in Oxford

BY ANDREW CLEMENTS

THREE YEARS ago the University of Oxford bestowed upon Herbert von Karajan an honorary Doctorate of Music. On Thursday at the Sheldonian Theatre Karajan demonstrated his thanks publicly, bringing the young violinist Anne Sophie Mutter and a substantial portion of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra for a charity concert of Bach, Mozart and Richard Strauss.

Those who perhaps have only seen and heard Karajan in the grander, more remote setting of a Festival Hall concert would have been surprised by the relaxed, intimate impression he suggested here. In the second Brandenburg Concerto he directed from the harpsichord, discreetly bolstered by a second continuo player when the necessities of guiding the performance took precedence.

Despite paring down the ensemble to a handful of strings, the result was still monumental,

to the devastating performance of Strauss's *Metamorphosen* that ended the concert. For all one's misgivings about von Karajan in many areas of the repertory, no one could deny his supremacy in such a piece as this. In place of the original 23 solo strings he uses (with the composer's consent) a full string orchestra, which in the Sheldonian gave an astonishing depth of tone. The full band was reserved for the biggest climaxes and to give a bloom to the gradually extinguished final bars. Elsewhere the range of dynamics was vast: chamber-like textures were terraced within an overall cushion of sound, single instruments were picked out with exemplary clarity. In such a piece, the strings of the Berlin Philharmonic making a stirring noise moulded and cast into vast paragraphs by a conductor with a concern for microscopic detail, it is difficult to find a weakness. A haunting performance.

Dorati's birthday

BY DOMINIC GILL

To celebrate the 75th birthday of their conductor laureate, Antal Dorati, on Thursday night the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra included in their Festival Hall programme the British premiere of Dorati's own cello concerto. The composer, naturally, conducted.

Scored in three movements, just over half an hour long, Dorati's concerto was begun in the late 1940s, but not finished until 1977. Parts of it, especially of the opening "Recitativo" movement, put me in mind of a rather good soundtrack to an up-market psychological thriller movie. Other parts, less cine-

matic, and a little less thrilling, were very much the sort of music one would expect from a distinguished Hungarian conductor to keep in his bottom drawer: modal melodies, swelling wistful paragraphs, Bartókian bumps in the night and all. It must have been very nice for Dorati to hear the piece, and it was very nice of the RPO to play it for him—one could hardly imagine a better birthday present.

The orchestra had begun the evening under Dorati with Haydn's "London" Symphony No. 104 in the same careful and civilised manner we have come to know so well over the years

(and especially from Dorati's huge 10-volume record set of the complete Haydn symphonies)—powerfully cogent rather than powerfully eloquent.

The soloist, rich-toned and beautifully tuned, was Janos Starker—who was joined by Yehudi Menuhin after the interval for the evening's finale, Brahms's Double Concerto for cello and violin. Three distinct musical characters emerged during the performance, Starker and Menuhin and Dorati, none truly compatible with the other. Technically the playing was uneven, sometimes scrappy; yet the performance had a peculiar and irresistible charm.

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of Strauss's *Metamorphosen* that ended the concert. For all one's misgivings about von Karajan in many areas of the repertory, no one could deny his supremacy in such a piece as this. In place of the original 23 solo strings he uses (with the composer's consent) a full string orchestra, which in the Sheldonian gave an astonishing depth of tone. The full band was reserved for the biggest climaxes and to give a bloom to the gradually extinguished final bars. Elsewhere the range of dynamics was vast: chamber-like textures were terraced within an overall cushion of sound, single instruments were picked out with exemplary clarity. In such a piece, the strings of the Berlin Philharmonic making a stirring noise moulded and cast into vast paragraphs by a conductor with a concern for microscopic detail, it is difficult to find a weakness. A haunting performance.

Yet all this was but a prelude to the devastating performance

F.T. CROSSWORD PUZZLE No. 4,581

A prize of £10 will be given to each of the senders of the first three correct solutions opened. Solutions must be received by next Thursday, marked Crossword in the top left-hand corner of the envelope, and addressed to the Financial Times, 10, Cannon Street, London, EC4P 4BY. Winners and solution will be given next Saturday.

Name

Address

TV/Radio

BBC 1

+ Indicates programme in black and white

7.15-8.30 Open University

(Ultra high frequency only). 9.10 Rockface. 9.35 Lassie. 9.55 Help! It's The Hair Bear Bunch. 10.20 Charlie Chaplin in "The Floorwalker." 10.52 Weather. 10.55 Cricket: Benson and Hedges Cup.

11.5 Grandstand: Football Focus (120); Racing from Thirsk (135, 2.05, 2.35); Speedway

(1.55); The Embassy International: Cricket (2.25, 3.50)

The Benson and Hedges Cup; World Cup Football (2.50, 3.55) Wales v USSR; Show jumping from Hickstead (4.45). 5.00 Final Score.

5.55 Dixon of Dock Green, starring Jack Warner. 6.00 News.

6.10 Sport/Regional News.

6.15 You Must Be Joking!

6.45 World Cup Grandstand:

Switzerland v England.

8.50 The Val Doonican Music Show.

9.35 News and Sport.

9.50 Roots by Alex Haley.

11.25 Saturday Night at the BBC.

All Regions as BBC1 except as follows:

Cymru/Wales — 6.10-6.15 pm

Sports News Wales.

Scotland — 12.15 am News

and Weather for Scotland.

Northern Ireland — 2.25-3.55 pm

Royal Ulster Constabulary from "Grandstand".

Ireland, from Newlands, Cape-town. 6.10-6.15 Northern Ireland News and Sport. 12.15 am News and Weather for Northern Ireland.

England — 6.10-6.15 pm (South-West only) Saturday Spotlight.

BBC 2

7.40 am-1.55 pm Open University.

1.55 pm Saturday Cinema:

"The Chalk Face," 9.35 Numbers at Work. 10.00 Welcome Back, Kotter.

11.35 The Extraordinary People Show.

12.25 The Enchanted House.

1.15 The Enchanted House.

2.00 Play It Again (S). 5.00 Jazz Record Requests (S). 5.45 Critic's Choice.

5.55 Mat-Mid Sat. 6.30 Sun.

7.30 Mat-Mid Sun. 8.30 Mon-Wed.

9.30 Mat-Mid Sun. 10.30 Mon-Wed.

11.30 Mat-Mid Sun. 12.30 Mon-Wed.

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COLLECTING

Table manners

BY JUNE FIELD

The dining parlour must be furnished with nothing trifling, or which may seem unbecoming, it being appropriated for the chief repast and should not be encumbered with any article that would seem to intrude on the accommodation of the guests.

Sheraton, The Cabinet Dictionary 1803.

WATCH out for "married" pieces, particularly in dining room furniture, warns an antique dealer, commenting on the current "invaluable demand" for three-pillar dining tables. "At any one time there are normally only one or two really good three-pillar tables on the market, it is more than likely that you will be offered a married piece, where although both top and base may be old, they did not start life together," says Mr Jerome Phillips, Hertfordshire antique furniture specialist.

He advises buyers to consider other types of dining tables made in the Sheraton and Regency periods, which are much more easily obtainable, and far better value, certainly when you come to sell. And above all, to buy quality.

Until about the late 17th century, dining rooms did not exist, and meals were eaten in the hall. Diners sat at long, low, narrow trestle tables with their backs to the wall, presumably in case of attack by enemies. After the Restoration, a greater sense of security prevailed, and by 1688 Randle Holme, a heraldic painter of Chester, who in 1684 was appointed Surveyor of the Chamber Extraordinary to Charles II, was describing in his *Academy of Armory*, "things necessary for and belonging to a dining Rome."

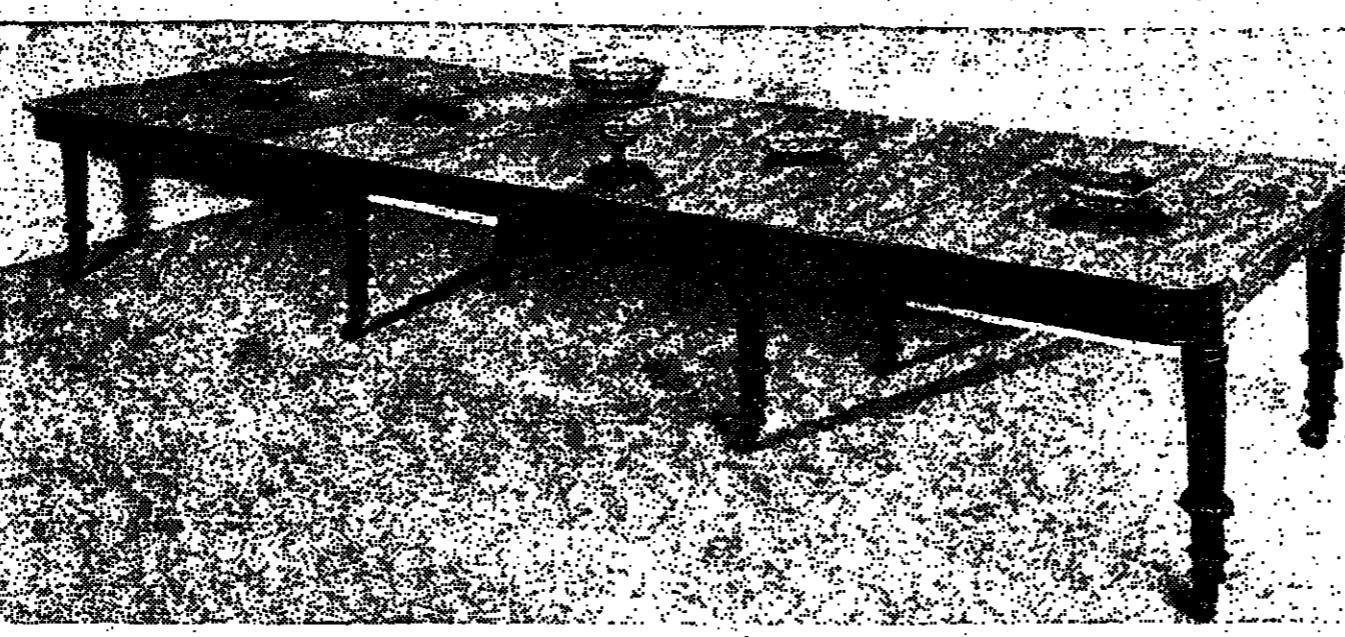
They included "a long table in the middle, either square, to draw out in Leaves or Round, or oval with falling leaves." A detailed list of items followed, varying from fine grates to flower pots, "court Cubbets, chairs and stools of Turkey work to Viall and Cruces for Vinigar, Cyle and Mustard Pot," plus Alabaster figures to adorn the windows.

Extendable tables were recorded in 1665 by Samuel Pepys: "...To Sir Philip Warwick, to dinner, where abundance of company came in unexpectedly; and here saw one pretty piece of household stuff, as the company increased, to put a larger leaf upon an oval table..."

By 1780, there were various patents for extending tables by some kind of mechanism which with very little effort transformed them into larger or smaller pieces. And it is some of these ingenious items which form part of a novel exhibition of Dining Room Furniture 1730-1830, organised by Mr Phillips, at the Manor House which he has encompassed Patent Metamorphic Furniture 1780-1830, Library Furniture 1750-1830, and Beds and Bedroom Furniture 1700-1830. A catalogue of the current exhibition, together with a reference book list, is free by post, while for those of the three previous displays are 60p each.

Particularly practical is the "Patient Sympathetic and Self-acting" table by William Pocock. Born in Buckinghamshire in 1750, he started off as a carpenter, establishing a building business in Essex in 1780, and progressing to his own cabinet-making and upholstery showrooms in London's Southampton Street around 1802, where he specialised in mechanical furniture.

An advertisement for the table described it as "which one person can, with Ease and Facility, enlarge or diminish to the size required, in a Manner perfectly new". It would "suit either the Cottage Orné, the



Massive dining table with nine leaves and eight legs, to seat 24 people. Four of the legs are removable, and four of the leaves which go into a special box. The extending section works by a

winding handle. It is on show at the exhibition Dining Room Furniture 1730-1830 which opens at Phillips of Hitchin (Antiques) on Monday until June 30.

the fine Georgian house where Jerome's grandfather, Frederick William Phillips, first set up as an antique dealer in 1824. This is the fourth in the series of informed specialist selling exhibitions at the Manor House which have encompassed Patent Metamorphic Furniture 1780-1830, Library Furniture 1750-1830, and Beds and Bedroom Furniture 1700-1830. A catalogue of the current exhibition, together with a reference book list, is free by post, while for those of the three previous displays are 60p each.

The whole thing works by an ingenious system of ropes and pulleys inside the table. You pull the end towards you, the two leaves separate, and another instantly rises to fill up the space, without any assistance from the person enlarging it," according to the original advertisement of the early 1800s. A slight jerk and the extra leaf pops back again.

"Hence the leaf does not have to be actually taken out as in the case with nearly all other tables," explained Mr Phillips as he demonstrated the action.

Quite magnificent is the mahogany table similar to Gillow's of Lancaster's telescopic dining table for which in 1800 Richard Gillow took out a patent. This was a system of "attaching to a table mounted upon a frame and legs or pillars and chains, wooden or metal sliders which run in dovetail, T or square or cylindrical or other grooves, with or without wheels or rollers." Gillow supplied

festive Board of the hospitable Mansion, or the extensive Entertainments of the Nobility and Man of Fashion." It could also be made portable so "as to go with the Baggage of a Regiment for the officers' mess.

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many such tables to country houses such as Broughton Hall, Yorkshire, and Workington Hall, Cumbria.

The one in the exhibition has nine leaves, supported by only eight legs (four of which are removable). With it goes a box for the extra leaves and the winding handle. The table seats 24 people and costs £7,500 complete.

Also, on show will be sets of Sheraton and Hepplewhite period chairs (from £500 to £12,000), a Regency "fold-up" games table, probably used aboard ships, £1,500, and various dining room appendages such as a Chippendale period decanter box with its original containers.

Useful reading is Ralph Edward's *The Shorter Dictionary of English Furniture* (Country Life), Geoffrey Wills' *English Furniture 1760-1900* (Guinness Superlatives), E. T. Joy's *English Furniture 1800-1850* (Sotheby Parke-Bernet/Ward Locke), which includes a chapter on metamorphic furniture, and *Oak Furniture—The British Tradition*, by Victor Chinnery (Antique Collectors' Club), all of which are usually stocked in Phillips' art book department.

Before his first victory. But he is so steady and straight from the tee that until two weeks ago he had survived to the final 36 holes in 40 consecutive events in America. On his first trip to Britain last September, however, he missed the cut in the European Open. Such a consistent player was probably a good bet to make fewer mistakes than his rivals, and that was how it transpired last Sunday. When each man had nine holes to play Nicklaus, Tom Purtzer, Fergus, Jack Reiner and George Archer were all three under par, with three others including Watson and Kite at two under.

Fergus made a brilliant birdie two from four feet at the diabolically difficult 153-yard 12th hole and then made par at the last six, a feat none of his opponents could match. In succession Nicklaus dropped a stroke at the 11th and two more at the 12th, a hole that has wrecked his chances twice before. Lanny Watkins took six at the par four 18th. Fergus' partner Reiner took four at the 12th, and the two-stroke swing that obviously did much to destroy him.

Watson put his in the creek on Sunday, promptly pitched straight into the hole to save his par, and even then failed to capitalise on his good fortune.

Muirfield Village is so unfor-

giving that once a player starts going wrong it is very difficult to arrest the slide. In the 1976 Memorial, 40 scores in the 80s were recorded. In 1977 such a luminary as Ben Crenshaw signed for 87 shots in his first round. In 1979 five players scored 85 in the second round, then Bob Shearer and Rod Pensek took one more shot each than that. Last year the longest hitter on the U.S. Tour, Dan Pohl, brought in an 88, a score which was matched last Sunday afternoon by the budding superstar Gary Hallberg. So I am sure you can understand what I mean by relentless.

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Saturday May 30 1981

Looking for the upturn

WHILE businessmen and politicians in Britain continue with their untiring, but so far unavailing efforts to spot the point at which the economy begins to turn, it is ironic and somewhat disconcerting that the pundits of Wall Street should be playing the same game in reverse. Just as the precipitous drop in the British economy has to some to end sooner or later, so the resilience of the U.S. economy in the face of real interest rates of 10 per cent or more cannot continue for ever. But just as businessmen and politicians in Britain disagree violently on whether prospects are at last improving, so the opinion in America, and even within the Reagan Administration, about the course of the economy and interest rates, seems to fluctuate wildly from week to week.

Decline

Thus, Thursday's cut of half a percentage point— 20 per cent—in Chase Manhattan's prime rate may have set off a wave of buying in the American bond markets and selling in the foreign exchanges. But it is still far from clear whether dollar interest rates have really peaked at last and, if so, whether any decline in rates will prove more lasting than the fall from $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to 17 per cent that took place in the first three months of this year.

While Mr Donald Regan Treasury Secretary, and Mr. Malcolm Baldridge, Commerce Secretary, have been assuring investors that there would be a "dramatic fall" in interest rates by the year end, it is only a few weeks since Mr. Bert Sprinkel, the Treasury Under-Secretary for Monetary Affairs, was warning that prime rates were unlikely to fall below 15 per cent this year. Perhaps that could be interpreted as a "dramatic" fall from the present levels, but with U.S. inflation stabilising around 10 per cent, it suggests that high real rates of interest are becoming a permanent feature of the American way of life.

Incentives

It is anybody's guess what this may mean for the American economy, with its low personal savings ratios, and its traditional dependence on consumer credit on the one hand and its relatively low levels of corporate indebtedness on the other. The imminent of President Reagan's proposed tax reforms, which include substantial investment incentives, as well as personal tax cuts, make forecasts of consumption, investment and output in the U.S. even more problematical, particularly as it is still far from clear what effect the final tax package will take and when it will be implemented.

Recovery

For the British economy, a revival in trade and an upturn in the world business cycle is especially important. An improvement in exports could provide one of the main planks for an economic recovery at a time when domestic consumer demand will probably be reduced as a result of low wage settlements and the rising real burden of taxes.

Fortunately there is now less probability that Opec will scupper a world recovery with further increases in oil prices in the coming year. And there are still many analysts who expect the American economy to pull out of a brief period of high interest rates with continuing growth accompanied by lower inflation. That in turn should lead to low interest rates in the U.S. and other countries. But, as the many British companies which are again issuing gloomy statements, after the brief period of spring euphoria in the business community, realise, the uncertainties for both Britain and the world are now as great as ever.

How the German and American systems compare

THE CUSTOMER of a British bank may find himself confused by the series of announcements on charges made over the past few weeks, but the banking system is simplicity itself compared with the U.S. And, while the West German structure is easy enough to understand, it is almost certainly more cumbersome and expensive than banking in Britain.

U.S. banks have never established a money transmission network like the UK giro system. Customers can only conduct transactions through a bank in which they have an account. Not surprisingly, therefore, many hold several accounts.

As a result, many U.S. banks design their charges principally to tempt customers away from competitors.

Citibank, for example, scales its charges according to the level of balances maintained by a customer. Anyone who maintains a monthly average of \$3,000 in any combination of Citibank accounts is entitled to the so-called NOW account, which carries no charges and currently pays interest at $5\frac{1}{4}$ per annum. Other banks have lower minimum balances for this kind of account, which can be used like a British current account, but the threshold must be maintained on a daily basis.

A customer who keeps a monthly average of \$1,500 in any combination of accounts at Citibank qualifies for free banking on a "checking account." One aggregate balances between \$900 and \$4,499 a \$2 monthly charge is payable, for balances

between \$500 and \$899 the charge is \$4 and anything under that incurs not only a monthly charge of \$4 but a levy of 25 cents on every transaction.

According to Citibank, the idea of this scheme is not to penalise the less well-off but to discourage the habit of maintaining three or four accounts. Anyone who can establish that he maintains his primary account at Citibank (for example by having his salary paid into the bank) is entitled to further advantages. He will obtain a discount of 1 per cent on the mortgage rate and, by the end of the year, is also likely to obtain a better deal on savings accounts.

The U.S. banks have moved further than their British counterparts in automating simple transactions. Citibank

estimates that around 800,000 customers have cards for its 488 automatic teller machines (ATMs), which can perform most simple transactions and provide information on account balances at the push of a button.

ATMs have not yet been introduced in West Germany but banks there are working on a system which, in contrast to the U.S., would allow the customer of one bank to use a rival's machinery. German bank customers have never been too enthusiastic about pieces of plastic, however, and it is not certain that the ATMs will gain easy acceptance.

At present, the customer of a German bank can use another bank's facilities only to cash a cheque backed by a Eurocheque card. In this respect, the German structure is closer to

the fragmented U.S. banking system than to the reciprocal arrangements which have applied up to now in Britain.

Banking in West Germany is not cheap. At the Dresdner Bank, for example, current account holders receive interest at $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum but also pay a flat DM 2 a month in charges, as well as specific charges on some transactions.

Unless a customer specifically requests a monthly statement, an account balance will be sent after every transaction and the customer pays for the postage. The DM 2 charge can, however, be at least partially offset in the case of customers whose salary is paid into the bank.

Some British bankers fear that the technology which drew the British banks together over the past decade could backfire in particular could back-

THIS NOTICE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN OFFER FOR SALE

ISSUES OF GOVERNMENT STOCK

The Bank of England announce that Her Majesty's Treasury has created on 29th May 1981, and has issued to the Bank, an additional amount of £250 million of each of the Stocks listed below:

12½% Exchequer Stock 1992
12% Treasury Stock 1995
12% Exchequer Stock 1999-2002

The price paid by the Bank on issue was in each case the middle market closing price of the relevant Stock on 29th May 1981 as certified by the Government Broker.

In each case, the amount issued on 29th May 1981 represents a further tranche of the relevant Stock, ranking in all respects pari passu with that Stock and subject to the terms and conditions of the prospectus for that Stock, save as to the participation, the method of issue and the first dividend payment. Copies of each of the prospectuses of the Stocks listed above, dated 18th March 1977, 9th September 1977 and 26th July 1978 respectively, may be obtained at the Bank of England, New Issues, Walling Street, London, EC4M 8AA.

Application has been made to the Council of The Stock Exchange for each further tranche of stock to be admitted to the Official List.

The Stocks are repayable at par, and interest is payable half-yearly, on the dates shown below:

Stock	Redemption date	Dividend dates
12½% Exchequer Stock 1992	25th August 1982	25th February 1983
12% Treasury Stock 1995	25th January 1985	25th August 1985
12% Exchequer Stock 1999-2002	22nd January 2002, or on or at any time after 22nd July 1999	25th July 1999 22nd January 1999 subject to not less than three months' notice.

Each further tranche of stock issued on 29th May 1981 will rank for a full six months' interest on the next dividend date from the amount of the relevant Stock already in being.

BANK OF ENGLAND
LONDON
29th May 1981

The current of competition

By John Makinson



IF BRITAIN'S grocery trade responded to competitive pressures in the same way as the country's banks, we would all be paying more for baked beans.

The banking industry, long viewed as a gentlemanly cartel, is preparing itself for a competitive war which could transform the face of retail banking. But the irony of this particular confrontation is that, in the short run at least, the customer will pay more.

The high returns available from retail banking in the UK have made British banks, by common consent, the most profitable in the world. The introduction of new charges and of higher rates for existing services—Lloyds yesterday followed Midland and Barclays in upping some of its charges—therefore seems particularly uncharitable. It is all the more ironic that Barclays, the most profitable bank of all, should have led the way in driving up the cost of banking.

In the long run, however, the customer may benefit. The High Street banks are under heavy pressure not only from domestic competitors, such as the building societies and the Trustee Savings Bank, but from foreign banks which have now perceived the profits to be made from personal banking in the UK.

But the problem for the banks is that the cost of running these current accounts has been escalating sharply. With free banking, customers are as likely to write two cheques for £20 as one for £40. Barclays has one for £40. Barclays is attempting to bring these costs under control. It has commissioned a survey which appears to show that Barclays is processing 24m cheques a year for the customers of other banks while they are handling only 12m Barclays cheques in return.

These figures have been questioned by the other banks. An exclusive arrangement (which will continue) between Barclays and the Trustee Savings Bank is certainly distorting factors. The savings to Barclays will not, in any event, be enormous. A charge of 50p on 24m cheques would produce only £12m, set against last year's profits before tax of £523.5m.

According to Barclays, revenue is not the central issue. "It is not our intention to make money out of this," says Mr. Brian Pearce, the general manager who devised the charge. He is hoping that, by reducing the flow of other bank customers through his branches, he will be able to release staff to concentrate on more profitable services, such as home loans. This trend will also be enhanced by the increasing use of automated teller machines (ATMs), a field in which Lloyds has a clear lead.

The real significance of the move is that Barclays has turned its fire directly on the other banks for the first time.

For the past decade, banks have been fighting a losing battle with the building societies and, more recently, the national savings movement. The clearing banks' share of personal sector deposits has been steadily falling.

They also believe that, by raising charges to the customer, banks will make life easier for the competition. Some U.S. banks and trust companies are already offering interest payments on the equivalent of current account balances. Merrill Lynch, the U.S. securities firm, this week announced a scheme which would allow British customers to obtain money market rates on an account from which withdrawals could be made. The minimum balance, however, is likely to be high.

Charges for customers not entitled to free banking						Charges for customers of other banks	
	Minimum balance for free banking	Direct debit	Cheques	National	Giro credits	Cheques	
	£	pence	pence	%	pence	pence	
Barclays	50	17½	17½	7	30	50	
Lloyds	100	20*	20	8	30	—	
Midlands	100	15	20	6½	30	—	
NatWest	50	12	18	8½	30	—	

* Cashpoint charge 15p per day. † An interest rate which partially offsets bank charges.

The drive to contain costs and stimulate competition is producing higher charges in other areas as well. Partly as a result of discussions with the Office of Fair Trading, the banks have agreed to drop a mutual arrangement to transfer money on behalf of each other's customers (such as the payment of telephone or electricity bills) and share the cost.

As a result, the banks have negotiated a series of bilateral arrangements. But several recipients of the money, such as mail order firms and public utilities, have balked at paying the cost and all the banks have been obliged to impose a charge of 30p per credit on non-customers.

In a sense, the payment represents a counterpart to the Barclays 50p charge for cashing cheques. Some banks feel disadvantaged by the mutual arrangement and would probably have renegotiated it, even without the intervention of the OFT.

The banks' determination to allocate a specific charge to a specific cost acts as a driving force behind their more competitive—and expensive—attitudes. Again, the policy of the banks is in line with the recommendations of the Price Commission: "We conclude that in future, if net money transmission revenue is to be increased, charges should reflect more closely the cost of the service provided." The general manager of a clearing bank makes the same point another way: "We are trying to establish the real rate for the job."

But the banks may find it hard to justify a policy of imposing charges which reflect the cost of a service without giving more consideration to the benefit which they receive from current account balances. With both domestic and foreign competition knocking louder on their doors, they may be obliged to follow the Price Commission's advice that "fuller credit should be given for the income that arises to the banks from investing the deposit." And, as the Commission points out, that means paying interest on current accounts.

thousand others, such questions as—"How many bedrooms do you have; have you a flush toilet; have you an instant sink unit; do you own this house; and did you live here a year ago?" and so on and so on, not only in respect of myself but a separate several pages form for everyone else in the house?

As the questioner said "Everyone asks why it is necessary to get this information so soon after the census has been completed and what purpose is served by such questions?"

Is this merely another example of "Yes Minister" where a return instituted many years ago is still made even though its reason has been forgotten in the depths of time? Does Mrs. Thatcher know that numbers—perhaps large numbers—of civil servants are employed in this way?

Or is it perhaps a desperate attempt to create jobs?

J. L. Romanes,
Lothian Chemical Company,
3 Broughton Road,
Edinburgh.

Employed

From Mr. A. Jaquiss.

Sir.—May I take issue with Philip Bassett concerning his article of May 26 on the dilemma of the civil service unions. He says: "The options open are..." and goes on to list five.

I would suggest that there is a sixth option—to accept that the civil service is considerably better off than a large number of people in the country and get on with the work, thanking God for a relatively secure job.

A. G. Jaquiss.
Little Garlands, The Grange,
Grange Lane, Cookham, Berks.

Questions

From Mr. S. White.

Sir.—Why has Mr. James Prior sent a lady in a car to ask me—and presumably as we are chosen by computer—several

run the risk of not improving our annual record of overspending." Nott-Hacker: "Aren't there plenty of existing barracks that can be completely rebuilt—just to use up the money?" "No problem there, Minister. We've got nearly half a million acres of Defence estate to play with. The site we've chosen, however, is good agricultural land we requisitioned some years ago. It is still being farmed, but what we are planning to do is vacate an existing massive barracks in the centre of a town and build this brand new, one and a half miles away in open farmland. That way we can unload the vacated complex on to the local council so that they can expand their offices, while at the same time lumbering the local ratepayers with the maintenance costs for the buildings we no longer need. At a stroke we can claim to have reduced public spending, while pointing a finger at free-spending local authorities!"

When are we going to wake up. So the mandarin attempt to "protect" the public against tax avoidance—do they never weigh up the cost of such legislation? One could name quite a number of acts where the "no go" approach has cost this nation untold agonies simply because they cannot appreciate and understand the simple answers, and consult people who at least could contribute positive answers instead of negative.

L. S. Baxter.
The Leys,
Lower End,
Thornborough,
Buckingham.

Currency

From Mr. T. Prideaux.

Sir.—Mr Jackson (May 21) suggests that the existence of oil assets is a reason for sterling's strength, and that a slowing of production would not weaken sterling, as the currency would be buoyed up by oil reserves. He suggests that the market is a better guide than academics or politicians to a currency's exchange value.

But the accepted existence of non-price factors in explaining a currency's strength, most notably in respect of Germany in the recent past, is only an explanation of trade account surpluses in nominal terms when those surpluses cause an apparently over-valued currency.

But non-price factors are an asset as in North Sea oil—the market is a clearing mechanism and needs the product to be sold and financed to create a price.

As the Royal Ballet celebrates its Golden Jubilee, David Churchill weighs up the cost of its achievements

The business of ballet: 50 years on

TONIGHT at 7.00 the Royal Ballet takes the stage at Covent Garden for a special gala performance to celebrate its Golden Jubilee. The programme is being kept a surprise, but most likely it will look back on 50 years of dance during which the Royal Ballet has become one of the world's leading ballet companies.

Starting from scratch in 1931, the Royal Ballet (the "royal" title did not come until 1956) now includes two ballet schools and two ballet companies, averaging between them a performance a night throughout the whole year, and is part of an opera house complex which spends more than £12.5m a year on ballet and opera. In the world of theatre, that is big business—and Britain's premier ballet company is increasingly being drawn into the world of commercial sponsorship to help keep alive its artistic ambitions.

In recent weeks, for example, the Midland Bank has sponsored a special season of ballet "proms" at Covent Garden—the first-ever all-ballet proms there—while Barclays' Bank International is sponsoring the Royal Ballet's U.S. tour which begins in two weeks. Moreover, the Imperial Group is attempting to burnish its corporate image among "decision-makers" and recently unveiled a sponsorship package for rising young ballet stars at the Royal Ballet's dance schools.

Ballet and business have always been close. In the Royal Ballet's early years it was the economist John Maynard Keynes, for example, who managed to find time to help put the Royal Ballet on a sound financial and administrative footing to match the high artistic standards that Dame Ninette de Valois had already set for the company she founded in 1931.

"Keynes was always insistent on the importance of business ability in a man running an artistic enterprise," says Alexander Bland, author of a recent history of the company.

To the balleromane, the business of running such an artistic enterprise as the Royal Ballet may seem little more than a necessary evil, since the ballet pays to see. But even the most ardent ballet admirer is being forced to recognise the increasing financial pressures on the arts, if only from ever-rising seat prices.

The Royal Ballet may play to packed houses with seats currently costing up to £15 each, but it could not keep its high standards unless it was part of the Royal Opera House complex. Overheads are shared with the opera company and partly defrayed by a substantial Arts Council grant.

In the last financial year, the Royal Ballet's performances accounted for about £1.5m of the ROH's total box office receipts (including visiting companies) of £4.9m. (In recent years, ballet has proved more popular at Covent Garden than opera, but the much higher seat prices for opera mean that its box office revenue is greater at about £2.5m.)

Running the ballet companies cost £1.5m (for opera it was £2.5m) and the rest of the ROH's total £11.5m expenditure is accounted for by the cost of the orchestra, productions, and maintenance of the ROH. A further £1m was spent on UK touring.

Salaries eat up a large share of these costs: the ballet paid out over £950,000, and the opera company paid just over £905,000. Opera guest artists cost an extra £1.5m in fees.

The ROH thus depends heavily on its Arts Council grant which last year totalled £6.5m. The ROH does not



The show goes on: Dame Ninette de Valois (left) the 82-year-old founder with Dame Margot Fonteyn, seen here as The Sleeping Beauty, now marking the opening of the Royal Opera House for ballet and opera after the War

receive any subsidy from the Greater London Council for its artistic side, although the GLC has helped to finance the current redevelopment of the ROH complex. It is this grant which the new Labour-controlled GLC administration has just threatened to cut back.

The financial pressures on ballet were shown last season by the London Festival Ballet, the only other UK company of comparable size and status to the Royal Ballet. The Festival Ballet, which had a deficit of £100,000 last year, was forced to curtail plans for new productions and revive instead classics such as *Giselle* which are almost guaranteed to play to capacity audiences.

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with the help of young choreographers such as Sir Frederick Ashton, who was 27 when the company was formed, and dancers such as Dame Margot Fonteyn, who joined in 1934 at the age of 16.

But it has been the theatres themselves which have tended the play a large part in influencing the organisational development of the Royal Ballet. The company's first permanent home was at the then new Sadler's Wells theatre in North London, although the company was for many years known as the Vic-Wells Ballet because early performances were at the Old Vic theatre. Then, in 1946, the Sadler's Wells company was offered the choice of re-opening the opera house in Covent Garden in conjunction with the opera company. In order to retain the links with the Sadler's Wells theatre, as well as to provide a touring company, a

second and smaller ballet company was established under the auspices of the main company.

When the whole ballet company was given a Royal Charter in 1956—and subsequently renamed the Royal Ballet—the Sadler's Wells touring company eventually, after a number of short-lived new names, was re-titled the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet.

The Royal Ballet's connection with the Royal Opera House forms the basis of the ballet company's present administrative structure. The ROH Board (which is crammed with eminent captains of industry such as Lord Gibson and Sir John Sainsbury) has four key committees.

One committee each for ballet and opera (responsible for artistic standards), a committee for the development project, and a finance and general purposes committee. It is this latter committee, which meets monthly, which is the hub of the administrative side of the theatre.

Since the ROH is virtually alone in the world in having two leading artistic companies sharing the same facilities during the same season, there is a major logistical problem in ensuring that the different needs of the two companies can be accommodated.

This is the responsibility of a management planning committee, which meets weekly.

The position is complicated by the need to book opera guest artists three or four years ahead. Thus the planning committee has already made detailed arrangements of wardrobe, rehearsal time, and performances for the 1981-82 season, has almost completed 1982-83, and has an outline for 1983-84.

Over two-thirds of the 1,000 or so full-time employees of the ROH are either musicians, production or technical staff, administrators, or front-of-house

staff such as usherettes. The technical staff, three full-time example, will props to store needed sq ft of storage throughout London farm in Kent.

One of the keys to the Sadler's Wells' development over the past five decades has been the ability to find trainees and develop its own dancers.

From the age of 11, young dancers can board at the Sadler's Wells junior school in London. The junior school, some 118 pupils in upper school (from 11 to 16 years) have 11 to 12 of these boys eventually join either the Royal Ballet or Sadler's Wells.

The career progress of the two ballet companies seem unduly hierarchical at the base—some 111 boys at present, followed on to tier up by 15 corps de ballet, 12 solo artists, and the principal dancers of the Sadler's Wells.

But the Sadler's Wells management has a different policy—apart from being forced by injury to replace dancers—to give younger boys key roles at an early stage.

Last month, for example, 20-year-old dancer from the corps de ballet—Eugene Kuznetsov—was thrust into the limelight to take on what is probably the most famous role in the Sadler's Wells repertoire, that of Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*, a role which Anna Pavlova had already done. Makarova, the great Russian ballerina had already done *Swan Lake* in 1911. In spite of a last-minute back injury, Miss Kuznetsova achieved a standing ovation. She was being hailed by some as another Margot Fonteyn.

Thus, 50 years on, the company is still regenerating.

figures published.

THURSDAY: Provisional figures of vehicle production for Paris Air Show open (June 14). **EEC Steel Council:** Brussels. Mr Menemur, EEC President Anwar Sadat of Egypt. **President Obafemi Awolowo:** Lagos. **Health Service Administration:** conference opens, Nairobi, Kenya. **Journalists:** starts meeting with National Graphical Association, Scarborough.

FRIDAY: Housing Starts: completions for April. **Commodity liquidity survey:** for quarter. **Commons debates:** Paris. Stock Exchange turnover

Weekend Brief

That sinking feeling in jazzland

Microphone in hand, lit cigarette in the other, Ronnie Scott stands at the edge of the stage of his club, looks into the murk where the audience is seated and invites everyone to eat, drink and enjoy themselves. "Pretend you're on the Titanic," he enunciates.

A macabre gag, perhaps, from Scott who could be excused for experiencing that sinking feeling himself this week as negotiations proceed for the likely sale of his Soho jazz club. Tenor-saxophonist Scott, born Ronald Schacht, 54 years ago in London's East End, first opened his club in partnership with fellow saxist Pete King, in a sweaty Gerrard Street basement in 1959. Its spiralling success forced a move to the present, much larger premises.

At the outset the club was primarily attended by jazz devotees. But with the transfer to Frith Street the prices gradually went beyond the means of ordinary jazz fans (notoriously careful spenders at the best of times) until most of



Trevor Humphries

Ronnie Scott: "Pretend you're on the Titanic" the clientele were celebrating which now see the club up for sale for "around £150,000."

In its 22 years' existence Scott's, apart from presenting almost every jazz artist of consequence, plus distinguished non-jazzers such as classical

guitarist John Williams, has become a mecca for visitors from all over the world. It has never been a clique, fashionably in-place though Princess Margaret did visit it several times. As late-night spot it naturally attracted a lot of show business personalities. Peter Sellers was one. Spike Milligan and John Le Mesurier are still attendants.

Throughout its three levels—main club area seating 250, upstairs disco and basement bar—it is a haunt rich in characters: from the uncompromisingly cool, always polite welcome at the cash desk from a lady widely known as Roxy to the welcoming smile of Martin, the maître d' ("that's French for moron," quips Scott) and the scurrying waitresses and rare waiters.

But the choicest, most lingering recollections are connected with the performers, such as the American tenor-saxophonist who—unhappy with the accompaniment from his British pianist—tersely whispered to him: "If you're gonna play crap, play quietly." Or another saxist, Sonny Rollins, who emerged from his taxi playing his instrument, continued on the pavement and through the club on to the stage. Or... but two anecdote-filled books have been written about this institution.

And to those connected with the jazz world it is an institution and unthinkably for it to disappear completely. After all, there are not many venues which as well as presenting top quality jazz also provide the chance to hear some of the wittiest bad jokes in the world delivered by le patron himself.

TOMORROW: Bakers Food and Allied Workers' Union conference opens, Bridlington (to June 3). International Federation of European Contractors on Building and Public Works conference opens, London (to June 3).

MONDAY: CBI monthly trends inquiry for May. Parliament resumes—Commons debates resumes—Commons debates—Dr Ghazi Al-Gosaibi, Saudi Arabian Minister for Industry and Electricity opens Financial Times conference on the role of international companies in Saudi Arabia's development plans. London (to June 2). Co-operative Air Transport Association starts two-day meeting in Geneva to discuss air fares. Mrs Margaret Thatcher meets Sig Arnaldo Forlani, Italian Prime Minister. London. Burmah Oil v Bank of England (to June 3). Rail strike on

Southern Region. Financial Times conference on energy supplies—feast or famine? London.

TUESDAY: UK official reserves for May. Capital issues and redemptions (during the month of May). Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen's conference opens, London (to June 10). International Air Transport Association starts two-day meeting in Geneva to discuss air fares. Mrs Margaret Thatcher meets Sig Arnaldo Forlani, Italian Prime Minister. London. Burmah Oil v Bank of England.

Economic Diary

case opens, High Court.

WEDNESDAY: Advance energy statistics for April. Committee of Public Accounts reports published. National Economic Development Council meets, London, to discuss independence of public and private sector industries. Mr Michael Colinga, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for resources, addresses conference on strategic metals, London. Building workers pay talks. Financial Times conference on financing world air transport expansion, Paris. Stock Exchange turnover

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The Corriere and the Freemasons' secret lodge

Perhaps the saddest part of the sensational P-2 (Propaganda Two) Freemasons' Lodge affair currently engulfing Italy is the turmoil it has caused at Corriere della Sera, Italy's most important daily paper. The scandal broke with the publication last week of the names of 963 people allegedly belonging to the lodge, described by a magistrate as acting "as an occult power centre, a State within the State." The casualties so far include the previous government, the cream of Italy's defence establishment, and other lesser luminaries from various walks of life, who featured in the list and have been forced to resign. But the biggest victim, in some ways, is the Corriere itself.

For 106 years it has been the mouthpiece of Milan and the North's industrial bourgeoisie, a symbol of the Italy which created the country's wealth. In recent years it became a fourth-power piece in the hideously complicated chess game of Italy's politics and public life. Just who really controlled it has often been a matter of controversy. But all pales beside events of the past 10 days. The Lodge affair has struck the Corriere in two ways.

First came the mysterious deal which gave Sig Roberto Calvi, head of Banco Ambrosiano, the country's biggest private banking group, a 40 per cent stake in the paper's parent company, the Rizzoli publishing group. Ten days ago he was arrested and charged with illegal export of foreign cur-

rency. The trial began in Milan yesterday. But worse still was to come. The P-2 lists (whatever their authenticity) contained, rightly or wrongly, the names not just of Calvi but also of Sig Angelo Rizzoli, the majority shareholder, Sig Bruno Tassan Din, Rizzoli's managing director, and Sig Franco Di Bella, the Corriere's editor. The Corriere has seemed to be a cog in the sinister machinery of power, apparently perfected by the lodge. The consequences can be easily imagined.

Di Bella went before a meeting of his staff to admit that mistakes have been made. So far, however, he has refused to resign. In the meantime the paper's misfortunes have made front-page news elsewhere.

Depressingly, but inevitably perhaps, the warfare which is a staple of political life in Italy has spread to the Press as well. The unwritten rule that "dog does not bite dog" has disappeared. The Corriere, bloodied and besmirched, has been like a wounded beast, snapped at by its rivals, particularly Rome's La Repubblica. Finally even that other inhibition which usually stops papers discussing their own problems in public gave way to the pent-up pressure. On Thursday Di Bella was forced to carry a column by Enzo Biagi, one of the Corriere's (and Italy's) most famous journalists. "This is the most painful article of my career," he began, before explicitly asking for Di Bella, Rizzoli and Tassan Din, to step down, at least temporarily. This would allow full light to be thrown on events—the only way Biagi argued to maintain the image of the Corriere. Inevitably, in the climate of plot which grips Italy today, Biagi's move was interpreted as a bid for the editorship, the country's most prestigious journalistic job. Biagi indignantly denies

this, but the episode tells all about the mood at the paper, and in the Italian establishment as a whole.

The monsoon washes out the cricket clubs

All the first class counties have suffered from this miserable May, but for some it has proved a financial disaster. Both Essex and Middlesex estimate that they have lost more than £10,000. The former expected a near capacity crowd for its Benson and Hedges clash with Somerset on a Saturday, but the crowd, apart from members, was only 970, which was, nevertheless, its highest at Chelmsford so far.

The biggest attendance at the Oval was for Surrey's match against Middlesex in the John Player League, which produced £1,700. The club conservatively reckons that its losses for May will be around £5,000, but this does not take into account extra costs such as its Benson and Hedges game at Bournemouth where they had to make a second excursion on a Monday, costing say another £500. Ironically, the weather for its Schweppes Championship match when, for an experiment, no money was charged—which probably enticed an extra 1,000 spectators on the first day—remained fine throughout.

Neighbour, Sussex, has also been lucky in having been away during the worst of the monsoon, but it certainly does not command the same support. Admittedly, Sussex has a large membership, but 87 spectators on the first day of its game with Glamorgan—which it won 70-70 on the second and 56 on the third—is poor for a club which possesses the potential to carry off a major honour this year.

It is inevitable, when limited

overs

to continue or start on the second day, that the home team, the visitors, and the sponsor, will incur considerable extra expenses. In the case of the visitors, these can be substantial if they have had to travel a long distance. Possibly, the expenses of the visiting county for the second day of a one day match should be met from the competition's central pool.

In addition to club finances,

the bad weather has had a de-

pressing effect on the players.

Their start of the season hopes

of scoring runs, taking wickets,</p

UK COMPANY NEWS

NEB-aided company calls in the Receiver

ANOTHER National Enterprise Board-assisted company has had to call in the Receiver.

Yates Duxbury, a fine paper manufacturer, originally wholly owned by Total, announced yesterday that attempts to restore it to profitability had failed and the NEB and Total, its two shareholders, were no longer willing to provide further finance.

Warning signs about Yates Duxbury were posted in the NEB's report and accounts for 1980, published last week.

In the accounts the NEB said that the company was "under severe strain," had made losses of £750,000 last year, and "careful consideration" was being given to whether it could here-established.

The NEB took up half of Yates Duxbury in 1979. In total its equity and loan interests in the company have amounted to £2.9m. In addition, the Bury-based paper mill has received £780,000 of selective financial aid under Government schemes.

The money had been intended to assist Yates Duxbury in constructing and re-equipping a new paper mill, but it admitted yesterday that the plans had hit both technical and financial problems.

Total, which still owns 50 per cent of the company, has volunteered to meet 50 per cent of any ultimate shortfall in Yates Duxbury's assets, so far as these affect bank and bona fide trade creditors.

It has no legal obligation to take on this burden, and its statement appears to exclude repayments due to the NEB or to the Government bodies.

This is the seventh small company to be put into receivership or liquidation by the NEB in the past two years. The decision is in line with the Government's policy that the board should now continue to support investments that do not have profitable prospects.

The NEB became involved in 1979 in response to requests from the National Economic Development Council's sector working party for paper and board which proposed a rationalisation of fine paper making in the Bury area.

Robertson Foods slips to £2.3m

Profits before tax of Robertson Foods fell from £2.55m to £2.29m for the year to the end of March 1981, turnover down from £24.4m to £20.4m.

The drop in earnings occurred in the first half when the group slipped from £1.21m to £1.05m. Robertson, which produces preserves, breakfast cereals, canned foods, soft drinks and brewing kits, has now been taken over by Avana, which received acceptances totalling 96.54 per cent for its offer.

The pre-tax surplus was struck after an exceptional debit of £11.8m (£1.0m) for extraordinary items, including the costs of defending the bid from Avana. The loss attributable to shareholders was £655,000.

IN BRIEF

ROTHORPE HOLDINGS—At AGM, chairman stated that 1981 would be a "big, big year" in the UK with some overseas results overseas. Normal results would be restored early in 1982.

DE REVE HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS—Results for 1980 reported on May 6, 1981. Shareholders' funds £3m (£2.6m) net current assets £63.89m (£4.8m). Decrease in bank balances of £1.1m (£1.1m) in the increase in cash and cash equivalents. This is reflected in the company's cash and cash equivalents held at the group's corporate headquarters, London, and in the US, Paris, London, and New York.

LEYLAND PAINT AND PAPER—For the year ended March 31, 1981, shareholders' funds £3m (£2.6m) net current assets £63.89m (£4.8m). Results for the year ended March 31, 1981, were £1.25m (£1.25m) net profit after tax.

ROBERTS, ADLARD AND CO.—Profit and loss account for the year ended April 30, 1981, showed a profit of £1.25m (£1.25m) net profit after tax.

SCOTTISH HERITABLE TRUST—Profit and loss account for the year ended April 30, 1981, showed a profit of £1.25m (£1.25m) net profit after tax.

AND J. HYMAN—Plastic form company, profit and loss account for the year ended April 30, 1981, showed a profit of £1.25m (£1.25m) net profit after tax.

SHARERSHOLDERS—Profit and loss account for the year ended April 30, 1981, showed a profit of £1.25m (£1.25m) net profit after tax.

INTER-CITY INVESTMENT GROUP—Profit and loss account for the year ended April 30, 1981, showed a profit of £1.25m (£1.25m) net profit after tax.

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Minster Assets climbs to £6.54m

IN LINE with an interim prediction of improved results Minster Assets, the insurance holding company, turned in pre-tax profits for the second half of 1980 up from £1.64m to £4.31m bringing the total for the year to £6.54m compared with £3.6m.

The directors have recommended an increased final dividend of 3.4p per share, share making 4p (3.9p), and the earnings per share are stated at 7.83p (5.41p) after tax of £3.15m (£1.6m).

Part of the improvement comes from the reduced deficit in the underwriting account at Minster Insurance held through the group's main subsidiary Robert Bradford (Holdings) where losses for the year

dropped from £7.21m to £5.17m. This includes a profit of £30,000 on its life business.

Investment income improved by £1.09m to £9.78m and the share from associated companies advanced from a deficit of £12.807 to a surplus of £192,387. There were also improved results from Lloyd's underwriting agencies of £1.54m (£1.55m) and the insurance broking companies of £1.19m (£233,961).

Pre-tax profits of Robert Bradford (Holdings) more than doubled from £1.01m to £6.42m.

Of the business not conducted through Robert Bradford (Holdings) there was a reduced profit from investment holding, insurance services and issuing house activities of £682,331 (£682,893).

and motor accessory manufacturers came out as a deficit of £101,110 (£231,886 p.a.).

After allowing for interest of £701,250 (£149,766), and a transfer to the investment reserve of £12.807 to a surplus of £192,387. There were also improved results from Lloyd's underwriting agencies of £1.54m (£1.55m) and the insurance broking companies of £1.19m (£233,961).

Dividends absorb £1.37m (£1.34m), leaving a retained surplus of £1.25m (£233,961).

Comment

Minster Assets has cut the underwriting deficit of its Minster Insurance subsidiary by 27 per cent. The blemish in these results comes from the only industrial company in the group, Bradville, a manufacturer of ball and chargers, is most profitable in severe winter (when damage to the group's underwriting). In 1980's mild winter, it lost close to one third of its net worth. Minster shares moved up 2p to 88p yesterday, where they yield 6.5 per cent.

AGB Research seeks £9m via rights: final of 3.5p proposed

AGB Research, the fast-growing consumer and industrial market research group, has launched its third rights issue in little more than three years.

The one-for-four issue at 190p is to raise £9.1m gross. AGB is estimating that profit in the year ended on April 30 1981 was £8.85m, up 32 per cent from £2.9m in the previous year.

The directors intend to recommend a final dividend of 3.5p, making 5.5p for the year, an increase of 24 per cent, and they undertake at least to maintain the dividend on the enlarged capital in respect of the current year.

Turnover in 1980-81 was estimated at £32.5m (£29.19m) and attributable profit is said to have been £1.57m (£1.44m).

During the last two financial years, profits of market research and computer services rose by over 80 per cent and publishing profits by more than 50 per cent.

Publishing activities have not escaped from the effects of the recession, which have been reflected in reduced profit margins.

As a result of the February 1980 rights issue, which raised £3.6m net, the group has accelerated investment in pro-

jects and acquisitions. Total capital spending in 1980-81 was £5m compared with £3.9m the previous year, of which £2.3m was spent on acquisitions, £1.1m on fixed assets and £1.6m on the new Hanger Lane headquarters for the market research activities.

The acquisition programme included market research companies in Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. In addition, the group has reached agreement to acquire a 51 per cent stake in a German market research company for DM 2.3m (£480,000).

AGB expects to move into its new Hanger Lane headquarters this year. Of the total payable by the company, the final £0.8m is expected to be paid in the current year.

Although it is too early to forecast results for 1981-82, the board is confident and intends to continue its expansion programme on acquisitions, fixed assets and research and development.

The rights issue proceeds of £8.75m net will not only provide the resources needed to finance the immediate programme but will also expand the capital base and thereby increase the ability of the group to take advantage of different sources of finance in the medium term.

Bank borrowings stood

at £2.2m, cash at £0.6m and loans at £0.3m. Shareholders' funds are estimated to have been £10.3m.

The company's expansion plans include the further development of its international market research business, notably in the Far East. In the UK, AGB plans two new specialist journals and is spending significant sums on technological developments in television audience measurement and retail scanning.

The rights issue, which has been underwritten by Morgan Grenfell, is offered to shareholders on the register at June 10. An extraordinary general meeting of shareholders is to be held on June 15 to approve an increase in the authorised share capital, and dealings are expected to begin on June 16. The final day for acceptances is July 6.

Brokers to the issue are Grentell and Colegrave.

Comment

The frequency of AGB's rights issues would give cause for concern if the group did not have such a strong profit growth record. The profit estimate for 1980-81 reflects growth of 32 per cent at the pre-tax level, indicating that the group has hardly

immediate boost to profits of more than £2m. Minster's New York associate had a profit of 1.25m (£231,886 p.a.).

After allowing for interest of £701,250 (£149,766), and a transfer to the investment reserve of £12.807 to a surplus of £192,387. There were also improved results from Lloyd's underwriting agencies of £1.54m (£1.55m) and the insurance broking companies of £1.19m (£233,961).

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There was an increased tax provision of £1.00m against £1.37m because many of the group's projects for modernisation and expansion at breweries and maltings have been commissioned, resulting in lower capital allowances for tax purposes. These allowances are not available for new building work at licensed houses.

The profit attributable to shareholders was £2.58m (£5.88m) after extraordinary items were £168,000 (£48,000). The extra ordinary items were the profits on the sale of properties less tax. Dividends absorbed £534,494 (£486,037).

Comment

Wolverhampton and Dudley

Wolverhampton Breweries rises to £4.4m in first half

DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED

	Date	Corre-	Total	Total
	Current	of	spending	last
	payment	div.	for	year
Assoc. Sprayers	July 7	0.5	—	1.25
Capital and Counties	Aug 3	2	3.4	3
Radley Fashion	July 6	2.3	4	3.9
Wolverhampton Dudley int.	June 30	1.5	—	1.5

Dividends shown pence per share net except where otherwise stated.

* Equivalent after allowing for scrip issue.

Commenting on the results, Mr E. J. Thompson, chairman, says they show that the steady growth recorded over the last five years is continuing this year in spite of high unemployment and maltings have been commissioned, resulting in lower capital allowances for tax purposes. These allowances are not available for new building work at licensed houses.

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He says the group's extensive capital expenditure programme is now mainly directed at licensed houses—a policy "which reflects our complete faith in the future of the British pub."

In the last six months the company has opened two new pubs and made other major alterations at existing ones.

On the performance of the rest of the group, Mr. Thompson says the free trade business has recently gained a number of new accounts and progress has been made with contract packaging.

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SUMMARY OF THE WEEK'S COMPANY NEWS

Take-over bids and deals

Following acceptance of only 0.21 per cent in its bid for the company, S. & W. Beresford increased its offer for British Sugar Corporation from 265p per share cash to £35p, or 275 new SWB ordinary shares per 100 BSC shares. There is also a loan stock alternative of £35 for every 100 BSC shares. The new offer met with instant rejection. A 26.24 per cent stake in BSC is held by the Government.

Mr Graham Ferguson-Lacy, chairman and principal shareholder of NCC Energy, agreed to a merger with Simplicity Pattern on a share exchange and warrant basis. According to a statement from NCC, the package values NCC "at approximately £50m, or in excess of 150p per share" which compares with NCC's suspension price of 135p when it was announced that discussions about a merger with Simplicity were taking place.

Associated British Engineering is making an agreed £1.86m bid for Hirst and Mallinson. The terms are the same as those originally offered by ABE last month—six ABE shares for five Hirst. Since the original offer, ABE's share price has risen from 25p to 36p to place a value on each Hirst share of 36p. The offer has been accepted by Grovewood Securities, Hirst's largest shareholder which owns 28.6 per cent.

A consortium headed by Mr. Alastair Milne, a director of Phoenix Mining and Finance, emerged as the bidder for Charles Hill of Bristol whose shares doubled in price last week to 90p on news of an approach to the company. The consortium made an agreed offer of 100p per share cash which values Hill at £1.17m.

Sterling Credit made an agreed bid for Winston Estates, the property development and investment group. The terms of the offer are six 34 per cent convertible preference shares plus a warrant, for every one of Winston's ordinary shares, valuing the latter at approximately 147p per share.

Deals in William Leach and Bellway, two Newcastle-based housebuilders, resumed following details of an agreed merger to be effected by Leech bidding for Bellway on a one-for-one share basis.

Gamma Beta Investments, a private Isle of Man investment company, raised its offer for Hield Brothers, the loss-making wardrobe manufacturer, to 13p per share cash. The revised terms compare with Gamma's original offer of 10p, which was topped by Hield's largest shareholder, Stroud Riley Draymond, offering one of its own shares plus 18p cash for each Hield share, valuing the latter at 13.2p.

Lex Service is expanding its interests in the U.S. with the planned acquisition of Schweber Electronics Corporation, a Long Island-based electronic components distribution concern, for \$45.75m.

Ledbrooke is buying Wallis's Cayton Bay Holiday Camp in a deal worth £1.89m, while Sunlight Services acquired New Era Linen Services for £2.12m.

Value of
Company
bid for
Market
Value
share/
share*
Price
before
bid
Final
Value
Bidder
date

Company	Value of Company bid for Market Value share/ share* Price before bid Final Value Bidder date	Final Value Bidder date
Prices in pence unless otherwise indicated.		
Anglo Metrop.	111 102 101 6.31	First Penn. Mort. Trust —
Bellway	88 90 88† 11.41	Leech (Wm.) —
Brit. Sugar Cpn.	335* 337 315 201.00	Beresford (S. & W.) 9/6
Collins (Wm.)	200* 253 190 8.24	New Int. —
Collins (Wm.) 'A'	150* 158 135 14.51	New Int. —
Construc. Hdg.	197† 215 193 1.78	Fulcrum Inv. Trust —
G. H. Downing	200* 206 188 12.06	Hanson Trust —
Hield Bros.	134* 14 104 2.05	Gamma Beta —
Hield Bros.	134* 14 11‡ 1.43	Stroud Riley Draymond —
Hill (Chas.)	100* 102 92 1.17	Construction Assoc. Brit. Eng. —
Hirst & Mallinson	36 34 30 1.86	—
Le Valmont	45* 74† 43 0.36	Atlantis Res. Lloyds & Scottish
NCC Energy	— 200* 199 144.21	Lloyds Bank Simplicity Pattern
Rus Estates	58* 60 58 6.79	E. Produce and Laurel Prints
St. Piran†	60* 65† 65† 4.93	Gases Inv.
Savoy "A"	100* 102 101 49.56	Trusthouse
Savoy "B"	100* 111 101 13.71	Trusthouse
Tunnel B	445* 441 320 6.19	Ward (T. W.)
Winton Est.	— 121 73† 3.48	Winding Credit Greaseback
Wrighton (F.)	77* 70 70 3.48	—

* All cash offer. † Cash alternative. ‡ Bid for capital not already held. § Based on 29/5/81. †† At suspension. ¶ Estimated. || Shares and cash. ||| Unconditional.

On the London Stock Exchange the price of the Savoy "A" shares fell 6p to equal the bid price at 190p. The "B" shares fell 25p to 211.25 compared with THF's offer of 211.25. It is understood that THF acquired more shares in the market yesterday.

With the Kuwait Investment Office's holdings asserted to the offer, THF has access to around 33 per cent of the votes of the Savoy. But a number of directors and associates of Savoy control up to 45 per cent of the group's votes through a large holding of the highly voting "B" shares. Since this revised offer was made, THF has picked up a number of small parcels of shares in the market but with the shares frequently above the bid price this method of acquisition has been difficult.

Sir Hugh Wontner says in his letter that the THF bid is "totally misconceived" and the Savoy group of hotels "which are landmarks of excellence must not be allowed to pass into the hands of a large miscellaneous conglomerate."

THF says "no director of the Savoy company will accept the offer and this includes Dame Bridget D'Oyley Carte (whose grandfather founded the business) as well as myself."

THF says the Savoy price history bid speculation and not the fundamental trading and financial position."

Lord Thorneycroft, chairman of THF, says the Savoy board "has totally failed to show how they plan to maintain, let alone increase, the value of your investment."

THF dismisses the Savoy interest and tax from its hotels of over 27.7m.

Savoy has never made profits before interest and tax of more than £3.1m and over the last 10 years they have averaged only £1.3m per annum, a "desirous return on the revalued assets," says Lord Thorneycroft.

In view of the current management record we find it hard to understand how third-party buyers would support the valuation figures."

THF criticises the Savoy board for the "lack of guidance" on the Savoy's trading prospects. Lord Thorneycroft says that "it is our experience that the best luxury hotels in major cities are no more affected by a reduction in overall demand for hotel rooms than the average.

revaluation as a theoretical one which cannot be realised in the value of the Savoy shares. Lord Thorneycroft says THF has been advised that hotels like the Savoy's could expect annual profits to average about 10 per cent of the valuation.

This, he says, would imply that the Savoy revaluation anticipates an average return before

Thorneycroft continues: "Contrary to the impression which your directors seek to give, we believe that better standards are necessary if the Savoy hotel is to attract enough custom to restore it to profitability trading without resorting from time to time to the sale of part of the property."

Lord Thorneycroft says it is misleading to suggest that THF does not have the expertise to run luxury hotels or to maintain adequate standards.

"We better than anyone recognises the need to preserve Savoy's hotels and return them to their former glory."

He concludes by saying that having carefully studied the response of the Savoy Board, "we are more convinced than ever that our offers are very generous. They far exceed the value of your company now or in the foreseeable future under its existing management." The first closing date of the offer is next Wednesday.

Lex Back Page

Bids and Deals

express newspapers planned takeover of the Newport-based South Wales Argus group will provide it with strategic base for printing and distributing its national titles in Wales and South-West England.

At present the Express group, publishers of the Daily Express, Sunday Express and Daily Star, prints in London and Manchester, but it believes the future development of national newspapers is likely to be found in "satellite" printing facilities in the UK.

Express Newspapers announced on Thursday it had made a £2.5m takeover bid for Argus.

The offer, worth £250 per Argus share, has been agreed by the directors and certain shareholders who together control almost 63 per cent of Argus shares.

Remaining shareholders are being advised to accept.

The offer is conditional on the Secretary of State for Trade sanctioning the deal before the end of the year.

Hawley offer for Provincial closes

Express to print in Wales after £4.5m takeover

Hawley Leisure's offer for the ordinary capital of Provincial has closed with acceptances received from the owners of 31,208,235 shares, representing 95.71 per cent of those issued. The remainder will be acquired compulsorily.

Before the offer period, 11,603,925 Provincial shares were held by Provincial directors, who may be considered to have been acting in concert with Hawley.

No Provincial shares were held by Hawley before offer period, and, except pursuant to the offer, none were acquired or agreed to be acquired by Hawley during the offer period.

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South Wales Argus (Holdings)

publishes an evening newspaper, the South Wales Argus, and two weekly newspapers in the Gwent area. The group uses the latest computerised type setting technology.

For the year to the end of January 1981, Argus showed a profit before tax of £389,196 and net assets of £1.35m. But profits for the year were reduced by about £100,000 because of a national printworkers' dispute.

Argus directors have said they believe the new association with Express Newspapers will not only assure the future of their own titles but also provide opportunities for further investment in their company, with "consequent benefits for the present staff and employment in the Newport area."

The offer has been declared unconditional and will remain open for acceptances until further notice. The cash offer, however, has now closed. Bardsey intends to exercise its right to the first closing date of the offer next Wednesday.

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BOOKS

Favourite of the Queen

BY PETER QUENNELL

Sweet Robin: a biography of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester 1532-1585
by Derek Wilson. Hamish Hamilton £9.95. 354 pages

On August 8 1588 although the Armada had scattered across the seas, the English coast was still threatened with invasion; and Elizabeth rode out, "like some Amazonian empress," to review her troops at Tilbury. She was flanked by two resplendent courtiers, her ageing favourite Lord Dudley and his handsome stepson Lord Essex.

Leicester would soon be dead; but before he left the scene, the much younger man, with his "coolly person, and . . . kind of urbanity and innate courtesy," had begun to rouse the sovereign's interest. As early as 1587, noted a contemporary gossip, he occupied an enviable privileged position and every night was received in her private chamber, to "play at cards, or one game or another"; so that "he cometh not to his own lodging till the birds sing in the morning."

The book's chief weakness is that, far from parading fine

phrases as did the eloquent Elizabethans, the author exhibits an obstinate preference for the commonplace.

"His love life had become an open scandal," we read: "it was the lady who made all the running"; "it seemed that Leicester really had found a way to have his cake and eat it"; "he had had to handle the Alceon affair with kid gloves"; and, on the subject of just how much the Queen knew about her favourite's amorous affairs, "quite incredibly there is no satisfactory answer to this question".

Despite such banalities, Derek Wilson has drawn a vivid and engaging portrait—doubly vivid because the facts with which he deals are often so bizarre.

Leicester had a somewhat doubtful past; both his father and his grandfather had been executed as traitors. Yet unquestionably he aspired to wed the Queen, even before the tragic and mysterious death of his first wife Amy Robsart; and the encouragement she gave him was sufficiently obvious to alarm her faithful secretary William Cecil. He had met the

Secretary, reported the Spanish Ambassador, and

"after my many protestations and entreaties that I would keep secret what he was about to tell me, he said that the Queen was going on so strangely that he was about to withdraw from her service. It was a bad sailor, he said, who did not make for a storm coming."

Although he would not, or could not marry him, and Leicester courageously remarried—first secretly to Lady John Sheffield; later, to a beautiful tormant Essex's mother, the former Lettice Knollys—he became, "in effect, the royal consort" and

"fulfilled many regal functions, especially ones which Elizabeth, as a woman could not perform . . . All aspirants for royal favour, from Burghley and the lords of the Council down to poor scholars and artists, saw Dudley as the supreme mediator with Her Majesty."

Perhaps his greatest qualities, besides his personal charm and particularly attractive appearance—he was a celebrated *homme à*

femmes—were the devotion he displayed and the trust that he inspired. She did not always accept the advice he offered; yet, he was still the chief counsellor. He was "her eyes," she said; and in the written messages she sent him she addressed him with the cryptic symbol—O O.

Her later favourites, Raleigh, for example, and the dashing headstrong Bess, might be more romantic and imaginative. Raleigh would write her his finest love-lyrics, and attempt to stab his gaoler, when her royal barge passed down the Thames beneath his prison window; Essex, on the verge of political ruin, rushed into her bedchamber and passionately kissed her hands and neck. It was Leicester's masculine solidity and resolute energy that she continued to respect and need. Near her death-bed lay a small casket containing a few precious reliefs, among them a short and business-like note that she had marked "his last letter."

Leicester, his new biographer admits, has had a very "bad Press." He was suspected of several crimes—Derek Wilson, however, is prepared to acquit



Medal struck by Leicester on his departure for the Netherlands—from the book reviewed today

him of having plotted Amy Robsart's killing; he was greedily ambitious, and in the service of the woman he adored he accumulated an enormous private fortune. But when he declared "I have lived and so will die only hers," there seems no doubt he spoke the truth.

Old foes

BY ZARA STEINER

The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1940
by Paul M. Kennedy. Allen and Unwin, £27.50. 604 pages

Paul Kennedy has done what few contemporary historians would have had the courage to attempt: reviewing a vast amount of secondary literature in English and in German and supplementing these with a wide selection of primary sources (there are over a hundred pages of notes and bibliography for less than 500 pages of text). He has traced the growing estrangement of two countries which in 1860 shared common links and were sympathetically inclined towards each other.

Dr. Kennedy has provided both an account of the diplomatic relations between Britain and Germany and, in a series of thematic chapters, a description of the political, economic and ideological pressures which resulted in estrangement and hostility. The coverage is broad and deep yet this is a readable book which enlightens rather than obscures and enlarges rather than narrows. What is most striking, apart from the range, is that this is a book which opens doors and does not shut them, a welcome approach in a field bedevilled by didactic and acrimonious debate.

It is Dr. Kennedy's contention: that since Germany became a unified and powerful industrial state, there was an almost inevitable conflict of interest between its needs and ambitions and those of a nation which, although still the world's leading commercial, colonial and maritime power, was witnessing a diminution in its relative strength and an increasingly competitive overseas position. Germany was an expansive power situated in the centre of Europe; Britain was a satisfied power whose world-wide responsibilities were greater than her resources.

It is difficult to do justice to Dr. Kennedy's range of reference for his analysis goes far deeper than to underline the basic economic rivalry which in its broadest sense made Germany the challenger and Britain the defender of the status quo.

In his analytical chapters, he illustrates how the nature of Bismarck's success, the differing responses of the two landowning classes to political and economic change and the contrasts in time and extent of the industrial revolution created tensions and new ideologies which compounded the difficulties between the two states and obscured or destroyed the ties of amity.

Dr. Kennedy underlines those factors which led the German elite to resort to military means to change the existing distribution of power. He examines the pressures which made the British excessively nervous about their possible isolation and the reasons why they were unwilling to make way for this new giant as they were to do at a later date when the U.S. entered the world arena. By 1914, Dr. Kennedy argues, these divisions were so deep as to be irreversible; his treatment of the immediate pre-war period is relatively short.

It could be argued that there is an inevitable rise and fall in the power positions of states. But Dr. Kennedy's treatment suggests that the responsibility for Germany's failure to achieve and enjoy its period of predominance rests primarily with her own leadership rather than with those who felt threatened by her rise. It may be that Dr. Kennedy's approach which stresses the internal factors shaping diplomatic choices gives insufficient attention to the international scene. It can be argued that some of the policies followed were less the reflection of the diverging interests between Germany and Britain but rather the consequence of their relations with other powers on the continent.

These queries only underline the richness of this book and the success of the author. The volume will be issued in the autumn in paperback form at what one hopes will be a reasonable price. For this is a highly stimulating as well as an instructive account of poetic drama in the cause of the English stage. Most of all, he drew T. S. Eliot into the movement and directed all his plays. This account of his life, with its work for the Religious Drama Society and the British Drama Society, was written by Mr. Browne jointly with his wife, Henzie Raeburn. It is a chapter in British drama.



Ralph de Boissiere and Eric Ambler: Trinidadians and Terrorists in novels on an international scale

English hitchhiker picked up by an Englishman driving a huge one set in Germany, one in France, in Italy, each told by a central character whose circumstances outside the story we know almost nothing about. In the first, the world of jingernauts and their drivers, and the English hitchhiker picked up by an Englishman driving a huge one set in Germany, one in France, in Italy, each told by a central character whose circumstances outside the story we know almost nothing about. In the first, the world of jingernauts and their drivers, and the English

what you can expect, in line with everyday attitudes), yet giving a sheen of acute observation; a sort of deadpan distinctiveness of eyesight, and distinctiveness of style.

And the "good read" is at a high level this time: Eric Ambler's professionalism makes

The Care of Time a thriller of ghosted memoirs becomes involved and acquires a reluctant respect for the dynamic

Zander whose rival Arab toughs are trying to get him safely out of Europe. Even the madder episodes, like the multi-million shelter against any third world war that may explode, seem scarcely fanciful in a world where money means nothing (there's so much of it) and power is still almost absolute

except—again creditably—in the face of public opinion and disgrace by ordeal on television. Very satisfactory and sharp.

Good writing without oddity, yet with an individual voice; about nothing very extraordinary (if you take the author's backview photograph, the narrator's view that it is just

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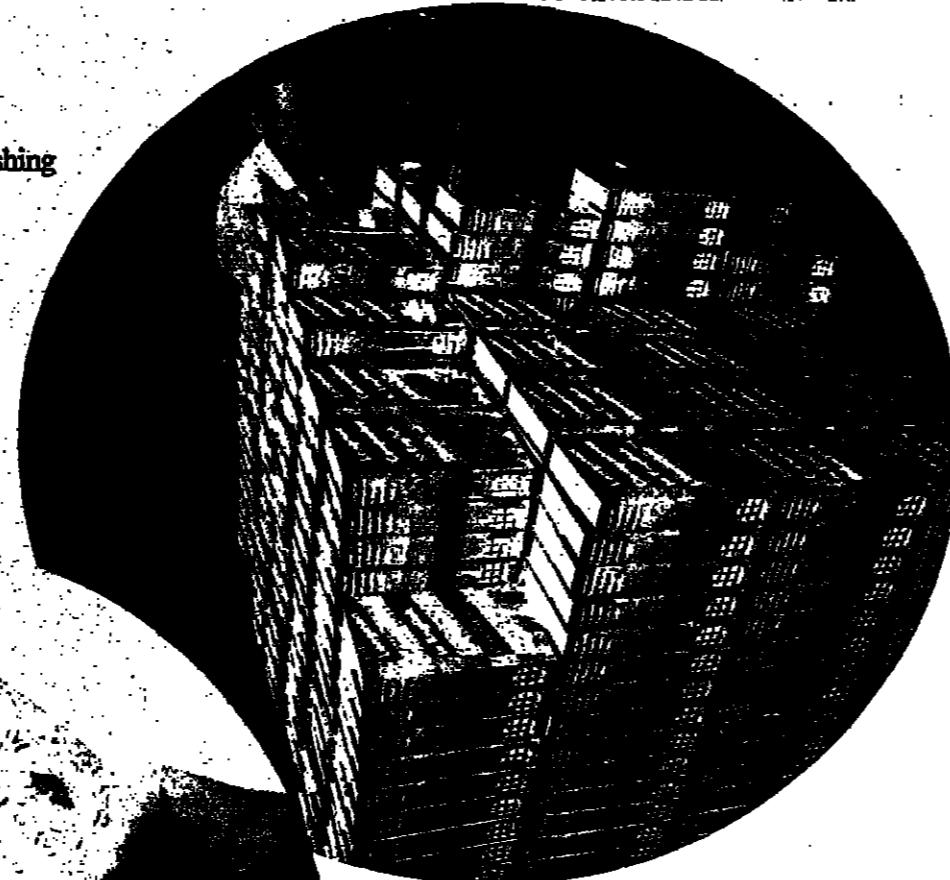
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Pearson Longman

Pearson Longman is Britain's leading publishing group, a listed company of which we own 63.6 per cent. Its businesses, including The Financial Times, Westminster Press, The Economist (50 per cent), Pearson and Penguin, cover newspapers and magazines, book and audio-visual publishing, and film production. Pearson Longman is thus well placed to exploit the new opportunities in communications in the 1980s.

**Royal Doulton**

The Doulton group comprises Pearson's United Kingdom manufacturing interests in glass, ceramics and engineering. Royal Doulton, the world's largest producer of fine bone china, had an outstanding year.

Doulton's interests in engineering were significantly expanded by the purchase of Fairey Holdings last summer.

**Lazard Brothers**

Lazard Brothers is a leading British merchant bank with an international reputation and long associations with Lazard Frères & Co. of New York and with Lazard Frères et Cie. in Paris. Lazard Brothers provides a broad range of financial services and is particularly notable as an adviser to large corporations. In 1980 all the main divisions, banking, investments and corporate finance, turned in improved results.

Midhurst (USA)

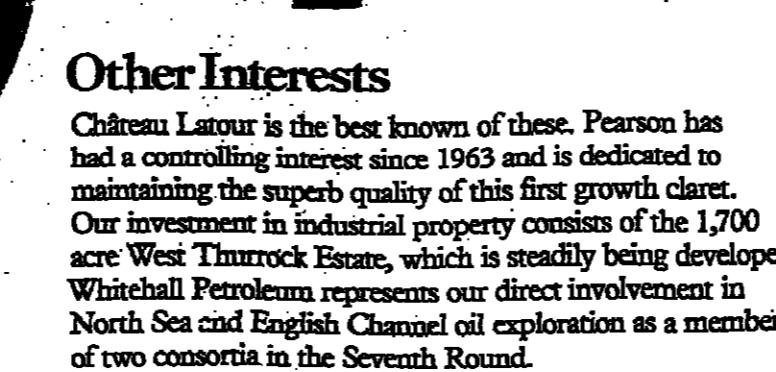
Midhurst's main interest is its 61.3 per cent holding in Camco, a leading international oil service company. During the year Midhurst acquired a 30 per cent holding in a second oil service company, Compressor Systems. Blackwell Land, in which Midhurst has a 36.9 per cent interest, is a major producer of grapes, almonds and pistachios in 19,000 acres in the San Joaquin Valley in California.

**Madame Tussaud's**

In addition to Madame Tussaud's, Pearson owns Warwick Castle and Chessington Zoo. Since the year end we have made a tender offer to increase to 25 per cent our equity interest in Cedar Point, which operates two major family amusement parks in Cleveland and Minnesota.

**Other Interests**

Château Latour is the best known of these. Pearson has had a controlling interest since 1963 and is dedicated to maintaining the superb quality of this first growth claret. Our investment in industrial property consists of the 1,700 acre West Thimrock Estate, which is steadily being developed. Whitehall Petroleum represents our direct involvement in North Sea and English Channel oil exploration as a member of two consortia in the Seventh Round.



THE PEARSON GROUP

S.PEARSON & SON

The Pearson Group's wide spread of businesses operating in many countries stood it in good stead in 1980. Profits held up relatively well in the second half and earnings per share fell only five per cent to 36.7p. The board is recommending a final dividend of 6.25p per share to leave the total for the year unchanged at 10p per share.

The five main divisions had mixed results. Lazard Brothers produced its best figures ever and Midhurst's attributable profits rose sharply thanks to a strong performance by Camco and unexpectedly high profits from Blackwell Land. Doulton's lower profits comprised a strong performance by the Tableware and Engineering divisions offset by a sharp down turn in Doulton Glass and the failure of Fairey to meet its forecast profits. The major cause of the decline in Pearson Longman's profits was the impact of industrial disputes and the recession on its newspapers. The book companies performed creditably despite difficult trading conditions.

RESULTS FOR 1980

Group profit before tax	£47.7m
Made up as follows	
Pearson Longman	£15.7m
Royal Doulton	£12.4m
Whitehall Trust inc. Lazard Brothers	£13.0m
Midhurst (USA)	£9.6m
Madame Tussaud's	£1.8m
Other Interests	£1.9m
Head Office Interest and expenses	(£6.7m)
Attributable profit before tax	£36.6m
Attributable profit after tax	£25.5m
Earnings per ordinary share	36.7p
Dividends per ordinary share	10.0p
Turnover	£591.4m

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please complete the coupon below and return it to our Registrars.

To: the Registrar (CAP 3/4), S. Pearson & Son, Ltd., Lloyds Bank Limited, Registrar's Department, Goring-by-Sea, Worthing, W. Sussex BN12 6DA.
Please send me a copy of the 1980 Annual Report.

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

Companies and Markets

INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES and FINANCE

HIT BY RISING COSTS AND WEAKER HOME DEMAND

Nissan Motor earnings dip slightly

BY RICHARD C. HANSON IN TOKYO

Nissan Motor, Japan's second largest car maker, said yesterday that its net profit for the fiscal year ended March 31 dipped 1.9 per cent to Y55.9bn (\$381m) and predicted that the current year may not be any better.

The company suffered from higher costs of steel, plastic and energy like the rest of Japanese industry, as well as from sluggish domestic demand. Nissan's domestic sales were down 5 per cent in value and 6.7 per cent in volume. They fell below export sales for the first time.

Overall sales were up 10.1 per cent to Y3,016bn (\$13.4bn). Because of overseas demand, exports rose 28.7 per cent to Y1,419bn (compared with Y1,233bn in domestic sales). But for the current year, Nissan says the outlook is for flat exports. Hopes are being pinned on a recovery in the

home market as the economy picks up steam later this year.

Exports this year will be hurt by the "voluntary" limits set last month for Japanese car shipments to the U.S. These limit shipments to about 1.68m units, down from 1.8m for the last calendar year.

In addition, Japan is under strong pressure to hold down exports to European countries where limits are not already in force.

Nissan said that the motor industry and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) have yet to work out "quotas" for the individual makers regarding the U.S. cell.

The export picture is clouded further by exchange rate movements, which last year forced Japanese makers to raise prices in the U.S. and Europe.

Comparatively speaking, however, Nissan appears to have fared slightly better than the

rest of the industry in the domestic market. It said its domestic market share rose to 28.3 per cent from 28.6 per cent in the previous year.

This year the company is stepping up the pace of a "scrap and rebuild" modernisation and rationalisation programme for its plants. Spending for new plant and equipment is scheduled at Y150bn compared with Y150bn in the previous year. Much of the money is being devoted to expansion of its capacity to build front-wheel-drive cars (it now has only one such model), an area where the Japanese industry generally lags behind Europe.

In order to finance part of this expansion Nissan has announced plans to raise about Y200bn this year in international capital markets. A 250m convertible bond issue in the UK was revealed last month. Within

two or three years, the company

wants to raise about Y200bn overseas.

Nissan's present strategy calls for a strong leap into overseas market sharing, and the establishment of production ties with European car makers. Early this year, work began on a small truck plant in the U.S.

By July—one month behind its original schedule—the company plans to announce its decision on whether to manufacture in the UK, and talks with Volkswagen of West Germany, have reached the stage of operational costs. In the 1979-1980 financial year, however, fuel costs doubled. Countermeasures against high priced fuel were thus less of a problem for JAL in 1980-81 than they had been a year earlier.

Operating expenses in 1980-81 rose by 13.4 per cent to Y644.9bn while revenues increased 15.1 per cent to Y654.9bn. The airline attributes the relatively modest rise in expenses to "increased fuel efficiency, cost cutting and general economies". Revenue increases reflected a 2.1 per cent increase in international passenger traffic and a 10.1 per cent rise in international cargo.

Domestic passenger traffic fell 7.5 per cent, JAL's first traffic decline since the "oil shock" year of 1979-80. Domestic cargo traffic rose 2 per cent in contrast with a 24 per cent rise in the previous year.

It will pay an 8 per cent dividend on the 53.7 per cent of its stock which is publicly held, leaving Y34m to be carried over from its after-tax profits. From its next financial year onwards the airline will also pay dividends on the remaining 42.3 per cent of its shares which are held by the Government. In return for payment of dividends JAL

will be granted increased latitude in methods of financing and in the appointment of directors.

The changes to the original agreement followed the disclosure in April that the Rundle venture has encountered serious technical and geological problems.

The "twins" say that studies to date have indicated that detailed work is warranted to establish the feasibility of developing the Condor project.

The programme envisages a two-year study period at an estimated cost of approximately US\$424m which will be borne by the Japanese consortium.

Possible development of the deposit will be negotiated during the feasibility study and for a period of one year after the end of the study period.

If the commercial go-ahead is given the twins will pay half the

cost of the study to the Japanese, and, if development goes ahead without Japanese participation, the twins will grant the Japanese an option to enter into a contract for the purchase of up to 10 per cent of the total production of shale oil from Condor.

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LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE

Talk of further big equity funding disturbs sentiment Index down 3.1 at 542.5—Gilt advance strongly

Account Dealing Dates
Option
*First Declares—Last Account
Dealing Dates Dealings Day
May 18 May 29 June 8
June 1 June 11 June 12 June 22
June 15 June 25 June 26 July 6
July 10 June 29 June 30 July 1
pence from 9.30 am two business days earlier.

A fresh advance in Gilt-edged securities provided the highlight of an otherwise drab day in London's money markets. The equity sector, in contrast, turned distinctly easier to the accompaniment of talk of two or more substantial imminent rights issues.

Leading industrials opened a shade firmer, but soon began to drift off as trading conditions became increasingly nervous and light selling found the market willing but a few more gains in the late trade left the FT 30-share index 3.1 down at 542.5 after having shown a rise of 0.3 at 10 am and a loss of 5.7 at 3 pm. Over the Account, the index recorded a fall of 15.5. Midland Bank, Metal Box, Tesco and Beecham were being put forward as possible candidates to call on the market for equity funds, the persistent talk about Midland, subsequently

denied by the company, putting the banking sector under selling pressure.

Secondary issues were lowered with the dealers, but again produced a number of bright spots mainly resulting from company trading statements and renewed bid speculation.

Gilt-edged maintained their upward momentum following Thursday's late flurry on the U.S. prime rate cuts and hopes of settlement in the Civil Service dispute. Reflecting overnight demand medium and long-dated gilts opened higher, but with further support forthcoming, pushed ahead to close with gains ranging to a point. The 3.30 pm announcement of three additional £250m tranches of existing stocks, Exchequer 12½ per cent 1992, Treasury 12 per cent 1995 and Exchequer 12 per cent 1999-02, prompted some late selling, but this was easily absorbed and final quotations were only marginally below the best.

A quiet session in the underlying securities was reflected in Traded options where only 750 deals were arranged. Calls traded amounted to 665, of which 133 were transacted in ICI. After Thursday's encouraging

debut, trading in puts was reduced and 94 contracts were made, more than half of which were struck in BP.

Midland dip and rally

Rumours that Midland would announce a sizable rights issue at the beginning of next week induced nervous selling of the shares which fell to 289p before rallying late to closely down to the 287p level followed by the reported price of 290p.

ICL slipped to 289p before picking up to close just 4p cheaper at 285p. International Paint added 3 for a two-day gain of 13 to 125p on the increased annual profits and dividend, while Allied Colloids put on 7p.

Stores subdued

Stores ended the Account on a subdued note with the leaders drifting a penny or two easier for choice. Scattered support was evident for selected secondary counters, however, with Owen adding 6 at 228p. A. J. Geifer, 60p, and L. D. Winstone, 29p, added 4 pence. Profit-taking left Cornell Dresses 5 lower at 285p, and Poly Peck off at 285p. John Menzies gave up 5p to 280p for a similar reason, while support was also lacking for Aran Energy which touched 85p before reverting to the overnight level of 80p.

Boustead attracted steady investment support and closed 14 higher at 142p. Elsewhere in Overhead Traders, Harrison and Crosfield, annual results due next Tuesday, eased 12 to 925p.

Commodities attracted useful support on recovery hopes and rallied 5 to 69p. Other Textiles tressed lower, where altered

held at 384p, but Shell eased 4 to 380p. Burmah came under selling pressure and lost 6 to 197p, while Premier Consolidated shed 3 to 68p. KCA International finished 4 off at 182p, after 178p; the company announced plans to seek a company listing on the stock exchange. KCA Drilling, dealing in NUC Energy resumed its subsidiary, KCA Drilling. Dealings in NAV Energy, after 502p.

The dismantling drill stem test of the Blina 1 well in the Canning Basin encouraged further profit-taking in Australian oil and mining issues.

Vampas were active and finally unisted at 750p, but Eagle Corporation dropped 7 to 46p and Swan Resources 8 to 65p; the companies jointly own Exploration Permit 114 adjacent to the Blina 1 oil discovery.

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Central touched extremes of 130p and 150p before settling unchanged on the day at 140p, while Southern closed 4 cheaper on balance at 35p, after 61p.

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MINES—Continued

Australian

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Saturday May 30 1981

MAN OF THE WEEK

A point of moral influence

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

IT IS a typically Italian paradox that the one fixed point in the present ocean of political confusion should be a frail, yet youthful, 84-year-old. Now, in yet another government crisis, the tortuous paths of Italian politics all lead to the door of President Sandro Pertini, in the Quirinal Palace.

Since he became President in 1978, the dreary ritual of consultations which precede the nomination of a prime minister designate have outwardly changed little. In fact, however, Pertini has changed the perception of his office. Once it was ceremonial, its occupants deferential to the wishes of the party potentates who really ran



President Pertini

"I am not deaf, dumb and blind."

things. But the measure of their lost grip on events, of their increasing mediocrities, is the astonishing impact made by the President in the past three years. Amid the distrust that has developed for the country's paralysed and tainted political system, Pertini has emerged as a new point of moral influence.

He is among the last of a breed of Italian politicians, forged by their opposition to Fascism, and their role in the resistance to Nazi occupation. From 1929 Pertini, a life-long Socialist, in fact spent eight years, in Mussolini's prisons. Then nearly half a century later, to his own and everyone else's surprise, he was thrust into the supreme office of the State. "I intend," he said in his inaugural address to Parliament, "to be President of all the Italians." To an extent unmatched by any of his predecessors he has succeeded.

Today he is the most popular politician in the country. The current generation of Italy's rulers may be trapped in a swamp of scandal and factional feuding, prisoners of the system and reduced to communicating in a language unintelligible to 98 per cent of the population. Pertini has become a rare official reminder that there is a warm, decent, human side to Italian life. Moreover he speaks out with a plausibility and calm that can move the general public if not the politicians.

Arnaldo Forlani, for example, the Prime Minister, and a silvery-haired 52-year-old, is referred to as a *loro ragazzo* (good lad). Obviously it is a bit theatrical, and Pertini has grown considerably, one suspects, to enjoy the role he has created. But theatricality has never gone away in Italy, and his basic spontaneity and sincerity is intact. Now the moral authority is strong enough to lead into real authority. Our recession openly exasperated by the inadequacies of the State. Pertini has once or twice taken matters into his own hands. The first was a typically maddening air strike in autumn 1978, which he settled. Most dramatic however, was his outspoken criticism of the public administration for its early handling of the southern earthquake disaster last November.

The politicians, predictably, hated it. They accused Pertini of acting unconstitutionally, of hankering after a presidential regime along French lines. But that would be to ignore the democratic credentials of the man. Rather, as it has been correctly if cynically observed, Pertini's moral rigour and unpredictable frankness make him arguably the most destabilising influence in Italian politics. But perhaps the lesson of present events is that this sort of destabilisation is what Italy needs.

"Once presidents were dumb, deaf and blind," Pertini once remarked. "I am not." He has been called *il nonno degli italiani*, the grandfather of the Italians. Often he can seem a doddering old man, out of touch with things. But he still hits the nail on the head. Just this week after giving Sig Forlani his first try at forming a new government, he described the mandate as a hot potato.

Defence review may cut neutron bomb research

France suspends nuclear testing

BY TERRY DOODSWORTH IN PARIS

THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT yesterday stopped nuclear testing on the Pacific island of Mururoa to give itself time to reconsider its arms programme with that of ex-President Giscard d'Estaing, who talked of the possibility of producing the bomb in two or three years. Although the Ministry of Defence did not elaborate on its decision in a short statement last night, it is widely believed that the review may lead to a cut in research on the controversial neutron bomb.

President Mitterrand and M. Charles Hernu, the new Defence Minister, are known to be a strong supporter of France's independent nuclear deterrent. His policy is in some ways closer

tactical weapon designed to destroy life while leaving inanimate objects intact.

This attitude contrasts sharply with that of ex-President Giscard d'Estaing, who talked of the possibility of producing the bomb in two or three years. In most other respects the nuclear defence programme is expected to go on as before, with some changes in the balance of the armaments deployed.

President Mitterrand himself is extremely sceptical about the neutron bomb, a short-range

of all-out nuclear war, has led Socialist Party planners to stress the commitment to continuing research.

The freeze on testing at Mururoa, therefore, is likely to be short-lived, although there are a number of projects on the island which will have to be examined.

These include experiments into the multiple warheads for the M4 missile to be used by the submarine fleet; a replacement for France's land-based Pluton missile; and a new medium range air-to-air missile.

BL and Honda to make 70% of Acclaim parts in Britain

BY JOHN GRIFFITHS

THE TRIUMPH ACCLAIM, being built by BL in collaboration with Honda, will have 70 per cent of its components made in the UK. The agreement with Honda includes contingency provisions for this to rise to 100 per cent.

After the Acclaim's UK launch on October 7, BL and Honda will start detailed high-level discussions on further possible joint ventures.

Details of the progress of the joint project were given in London yesterday by Mr. Ray Horrocks, BL Cars' chairman and chief executive.

Mr. Horrocks said BL's experience of working with Honda on the Acclaim "has been very encouraging. A number of thoughts are going through our minds. But we want to get the experience of the Acclaim under our belts before going further."

The level of UK components in the Acclaim is some 10 per cent higher than Nissan's said it envisages as possible initially for its proposed UK plant to build 200,000 cars a year.

But Mr. Horrocks said that even if this were to be raised to the 70 per cent level, BL would still oppose the Nissan proposal without a commitment to move to 100 per cent of British components.

Under the Acclaim agreement, BL will pay Honda a royalty on each car produced, although BL is not disclosing how much. Engines, gearboxes, fascia and some suspension parts are to be imported from Japan, but Mr. Horrocks said some of these would eventually be made in the UK.

The key components are the engine/gearbox units. Mr. Horrocks indicated that it demand rose above the anticipated 85,000 cars a year, or if demand for Honda's version of the Ballade, outstripped its capacity to supply, some consideration would be given to UK manufacture.

However, the minimum economic production rate would be about 250,000 cars a year.

Rover offer

BL said yesterday it was considering a £15m offer by a group of West Midlands business for its Rover car plant at Solihull, which is being closed. It was built in 1976 at a cost of £27m. Page 4

year, and any decision to go ahead would be likely to depend on whether the units could be used elsewhere in BL's model range.

Alternatively, BL might consider using one of its own power trains in the Acclaim.

BL's Cowley workers returning from the spring break on Monday, will embark on the final phases of preparation for volume production. So far, 195 pre-production cars have been built and volume production is to start in August.

BL says it will have 6,000 cars in showrooms for the launch. Initial production of 1,000 cars a week is scheduled, building up to 1,200 a week after the car is launched next February in France, Germany, Italy, Belgium and Holland. Mr. Harold Musgrave, managing

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Some EEC steelmakers badly want to see their products in the U.S. at less than trigger prices because for a major product line such as flat-rolled steel, trigger prices are more than 10 per cent higher than discounted prices offered by domestic mills.

There was no immediate outcry yesterday from the U.S. industry at the steel import figures. But it is watching the political situation closely as the Department of Commerce studies applications from four EEC producers—Thyssen of

Germany, Hoogovens of The Netherlands, Sancior and Usinor, both of France—for "pre-clearance" of their exports to the U.S. Under the U.S. steel trade law importers can sell below the trigger price as long as the lower price is ruled to be "fair."

The level of imports may also have been affected by the 4.4 per cent increase imposed from April 1 on trigger prices for foreign steel in the U.S. When steel imports fall below the trigger price countervailing duties can be imposed.

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However, the issue is complex and emotional because in coming to its decision the Commerce Department also has to rule whether the importers are benefiting from "unfair government subsidies."

Pickets outside the talks yesterday urged the union negotiators to stick to the 15 per cent claim, shouting: "We want no sell-out."

Air traffic staff at Manchester Airport took strike action last night. However, 13 staff at the Devonport naval base in Plymouth will return to work on Monday because of a leak in the reactor area of the Royal Navy nuclear-powered submarine Valiant.

The collusions between the two sides will do little to allay fears among some more militant sections of the nine unions' memberships that, having offended to talk without preconditions, union leaders are preparing for a compromise to end the dispute.

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The extension of the talks was seen as a hopeful sign for the conclusion of the dispute.

Yesterday's talks were led for the Government by Mr. Barney Harrode, Civil Service Minister. He will be on hand again today if needed, though the chairman will be Sir Ian Bancroft, Head of the Home Civil Service. Further meetings with ministers are not expected until next week.

The talks may continue tomorrow, though some union executives have commitments, including participation in the rally in London to mark the end of the People's March for Jobs.

The Government did not appear to have made major concessions. Most discussion centred on the Government's offer of an external inquiry into pay determination in 1983 and beyond. Union leaders pressed for clarification on the inquiry's terms of reference and composition.

achieved in recent weeks through the feeding out of "unofficial taps" obtained via swaps of stock with the National Debt Commissioners.

The city markets generally remain uncertain about the timing and direction of short-term

interest rates. The average rate of discount edged up fractionally again for the fifth week running at yesterday's Treasury bill tender. The rate rose by 0.078 points to 11.44 per cent, still consistent with the current Minimum Lending Rate of 12 per cent.

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